

Gay Community News

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O B A S A N



The Changelings



Jo Sinclair

AUGUST BOOK SUPPLEMENT

**The Changelings & Obasan
plus
Extra Credit by Jeff Black
Inland Passage by Jane Rule
and more!**

Report from the Fifth
Annual National Black and
White Men Together
Conference: defining
brotherhood, fighting
racism p. 1

**Minnesota Lesbian
Temporarily Granted Right
to Visit Disabled Lover p.1**

GayCommunityNews

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L.A. hosts fifth annual conference

BWMT Focuses on Brotherhood, Racism

By Ollie Lee Taylor

LOS ANGELES — The fifth Annual Convention of the National Association of Black and White Men Together (NABWMT) convened here July 15-20 with the theme, "Brotherhood: The Issues/The Challenges: A Focus on Racism." Stirring speeches and a variety of workshops gave the just over 200 participants an opportunity to focus on racism and homophobia together, and to recognize NABWMT's successes in fighting discrimination.

Issues of debate included a NABWMT name change to encourage greater racial diversity in the organization, the display of a Confederate flag by the Atlanta chapter, and whether baths should remain open given the AIDS crisis.

Deborah Johnson, a co-founder of "Debretta's," once the largest Black, lesbian professional network, was the first major speaker. In a talk called "Beyond the Yellow Brick Road," Johnson called for a going beyond disappointment and hurts. She said, "We have done everything in the world to our consciousness that we can possibly do to it," — raised it, broadened it, politicized it, sensitized it. "We've done just about

everything but heal it.... Unless we refocus our energies, we will self-destruct.... Your belief that you can make a difference must outweigh any fear that you cannot."

Citing the need for coalitions, Johnson proclaimed, "We, as gays, must, I repeat, *must*, participate in other civil rights movements. I've always said that if the gay movement wants to ride on the human rights bandwagon, it needs to get on first. What are we doing in our own neighborhoods as gays? Do we talk to our local politicians about our concerns? Do we, as gays, attend the meetings of other community groups? What are we, as a movement, contributing to our society? Do we do anything for the children? For the senior citizens? For the physically challenged? Where do our sensitivities lie? Do we care? Isolation breeds ignorance. Racism and homophobia are ignorant. We must integrate, not assimilate, society with our movement."

Johnson concluded with ideas for practical application: "Make certain you identify your target group and exactly what it is you want to accomplish. Beware of

trying to fix or change something of someone else's when they don't consider it to be broken." She also challenged the delegates "not only to talk the talk, but walk the walk." And, reflecting on the teaching of her mother, she said, "There are three kinds of people...those that make things happen...watch things happen and don't know what's happening. Which one are you?"

Steve Schulte, a gay West Hollywood councilman, and former executive director of the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center of Los Angeles, offered remarks to the convention focusing on AIDS and racism. On AIDS, Schulte noted, "We have to talk to each other, hold each other and learn to cry out loud. We have to examine our sexual behavior, our personal relationships, and yes, our lifestyles.... AIDS is not overrated and it's not going away."

Schulte described personal experiences of dealing with racism in himself and other white people, and concluded with a quote from Frederick Douglass: "Those of us who love freedom yet deprecate agitation are people who want

crops without planting. This struggle may be a moral one or it may be physical, but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without demand. It never did. It never will."

Rev. Troy Perry, founder of the Metropolitan Community Church, was up next. Sporting a button with the words "God is greater than AIDS," he declared, "AIDS is not God's gift to gays." Perry asserted that "the most revolutionary act today in the gay and lesbian community is still holding hands in public," and

termed NABWMT "the most revolutionary group in America. Anytime you deal with interracial couples in our society, still, to this day, it's revolutionary. Automatically, people react." Perry also affirmed his support for Jesse Jackson, saying Jackson was "the only one to mention us by name, not once, but twice. He was the only politician not afraid of our issue." In his concluding remarks, Perry said, "The greatest work we have to do is education. I believe it with all my heart. But

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Court battle continues

Disabled Lesbian Allowed Visitation by Lover

By Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves

ST. CLOUD, MN — A lesbian here once again has access to her disabled lover, despite the attempts of the disabled woman's father, who is also her legal guardian, to restrict that access.

On August 8, the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union filed a motion to restrain Donald Kowalski from restricting access to his disabled daughter, Sharon. This came as good news to Sharon Kowalski's lover of four years, Karen Thompson. Thompson's access to Sharon Kowalski had been denied after a July 23 decision by the Sherburne County District Court to award Donald Kowalski full guardianship. That decision effectively revoked an April 1984 decision which had given Kowalski guardianship while giving Thompson the right to equal access to her lover. Although the Sherburne County court is not expected to rule on the motion until August 21, Minnesota law provides that in cases of disputed guardianship, the previous guardianship agreement holds.

Thompson and Kowalski had been lovers since 1981. They had bought a house together near Briggs Lake in Sherburne County, which they put in Thompson's name. They had each taken out life insurance, and had named each other as the beneficiary. According to Thompson, they had exchanged rings and considered themselves "married."

Their life together changed on November 13, 1983, when Kowalski was involved in a car accident that left her a quadriplegic. Kowalski's parents were upset by Thompson's involvement in their

daughter's rehabilitation, and sought to limit Thompson's visiting hours. They maintain that their daughter is not a lesbian, and that she had only a tenant-landlady relationship with Thompson. On April 25, 1984, they were awarded custody of Kowalski by the Sherburne County court, with the provision that Thompson be given equal access to visitation and medical consultation, and that Kowalski remain in St. Cloud. However, in September, Donald Kowalski successfully filed to have his daughter moved to Duluth, 150 miles from St. Cloud. Thompson holds that the move was designed to frustrate her attempts to be at her lover's side, and further maintains that the move has been detrimental to Kowalski's recovery.

At the crux of much of the dispute is the extent of Sharon Kowalski's disability. Although evidence of her physical disability is clear, there is argument as to the extent of her mental disability. Kowalski has been described through testing as having the abilities of a six-year-old, and on this basis has been deemed incompetent to make decisions regarding her well-being.

Julie Andrzejewski, a member of the Committee on the Right to Recovery and Relationships, an *ad hoc* group that formed in support of Thompson's struggle to stay with her lover, maintains that the test results are deceiving. She argues that there is no clear way to judge the extent of brain damage in a case like Kowalski's. She further argues that some days Kowalski is lucid, other days not, and that there is evidence that she is much more capable of commu-

nicating, making decisions, and regaining skills than her father will admit. As evidence of this contention, she points out that Kowalski was tested by an occupational therapist to be able to read a 42-word paragraph, and to be further able to answer questions regarding that paragraph with 100 percent accuracy. With the help of a typewriter, Kowalski has stated that she is a lesbian and that Thompson is her lover. Andrzejewski says that Donald Kowalski refuses to have his daughter retested. Kowalski could not be reached for comment, nor could his lawyer.

On July 23, Sherburne County District Judge Bruce Douglas granted Donald Kowalski full guardianship, and granted him the right to decide who would have access to his daughter. On July 25, Kowalski denied visitation to anyone not on a list he provided to the nursing home in Duluth. Thompson was not on that list. On July 26, he moved Sharon Kowalski to a nursing home in Hibbing, Minnesota, despite the fact that the home has no young adult rehabilitation center. Earlier, the court had ruled that Sharon Kowalski was only to be placed in homes that provided such a rehabilitation program.

On August 8, the Minnesota Civil Liberties Union filed a motion on behalf of Sharon Kowalski to restrain her father from restricting access to her. On August 9, Thompson attempted to visit Kowalski at the Hibbing nursing home. She was blocked from doing so, and nursing home officials threatened her with arrest should

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S. Africa state-of-emergency hit

Boston Protests Apartheid

By Laurie Sherman

BOSTON — Protesting the South African apartheid system, particularly the current government-imposed state of emergency, 100 people marched from Copley Place to Government Center here, Thursday, August 8. During the hour-long rally that followed, the crowd grew to 200, one-third of whom were people of color.

The event was organized by a coalition of Boston high school and college students and anti-racist groups. Speakers included: Fahamisha Brown of the Free South Africa Movement; Chris Snow of the lesbian/gay focus of the All Peoples Congress; Willard Johnson, President of Boston TransAfrica; Sharon Denton, a Black Lincoln-Sudbury High School student; Oscar Hernandez, a Harvard student; Charles Yancey, a Black Boston city councillor; Themba Vilakazi of the African National Congress; Mel King of the Rainbow Coalition; David Scondras, gay Boston city councillor; and Christopher Krueger, brother of one of the Witness for Peace members who were recently captured and then released by Nicaraguan contras. (See GCN, Vol. 13, No. 6 and news note in this issue.)

The speakers talked briefly and stressed not only battling apartheid in South Africa, but acknowledging all forms of racism and bigotry in the U.S.

Snow and Hernandez also explicitly condemned homophobia as exemplified by the recent Massachusetts policy banning lesbian and gay foster parents and insufficient AIDS funding.

Mel King and Willard Johnson noted that Deak-Perera, the largest dealer of



Mel King (l) addressing protestors. Charles Yancey (r).

precious metals and foreign currency in the U.S., had announced suspension of retail sales of the South African Kruggerand earlier that day. According to the Boston *Globe*, King told the crowd, "The announcement is another indication of the impact these demonstrations can have. It must be very clear to them that selling the Kruggerand is no longer profitable."

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Anti-apartheid demonstrators marching to Government Center.

News Notes

surprise, surprise

WASHINGTON, DC — On July 25, the state of Georgia petitioned the United States Supreme Court to review a lower court's decision that the state's sodomy law infringes on the rights of lesbians and gay men, according to the *Washington Blade*.

The 11th Circuit Court ruled on May 21 that "the Georgia sodomy statute infringes upon the fundamental constitutional rights of the homosexual," and that the state must prove that it has a compelling interest to infringe on those rights. (See GCN, Vol. 13, No. 3.)

Georgia Attorney General Michael Bowers argues that in fact the state need not show a compelling interest to deny lesbians and gay men their rights, and that the Circuit court erred in its interpretation of the Supreme Court's 1976 decision in *Doe v. Commonwealth*. Further, Bowers contends that the 11th Circuit's decision is in direct conflict with a decision of the U.S. Court of Appeals in *Dronenburg v. Zech*.

Citing a case involving censorship of an adult theater in Atlanta, Bowers argues "that the states do have the right to make unprovable assumptions lacking in scientifically certain criteria, in order to protect a social interest in order and morality."

The 11th Circuit found that *Doe* is not binding in this case because *Doe* was affirmed for lack of standing. Bowers argues that *Doe* is binding, and cites *Dronenburg* in which *Doe* was considered to uphold a district court ruling that was based on the case's constitutional merits.

The Supreme Court will announce whether it will hear the case on the first Tuesday in October.

— filed from Boston by Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves



Marilyn Humphries

BOSTON — Anti-Apartheid demonstrators marched August 9 outside the offices of Deak-Perera here to commemorate South African Women's Day. Sponsored by Women for Racial and Economic Equality, the noontime demonstration drew approximately 100 people, with about two-thirds women. Deak-Perera suspended retail sales of the South African gold Krugerrand the day before, August 8, pending an upcoming U.S. Senate vote that would ban imports of the gold coin. (See related story, this issue.)

boston budget cuts may threaten aids funding

BOSTON — The Boston City Council recommended a series of budget cuts on Wednesday, August 7, which may put in jeopardy a \$150,000 grant to the AIDS Action Committee. The Council recommended budget cuts in the area of contractual services, beginning with the most recent programs. Because the AIDS Action Committee would be receiving its first Health and Hospitals grant, this proposed cut could eliminate that grant.

According to a knowledgeable source, seven votes are needed to restore the grant; six votes are secured. Councillors Jim Kelly (South End-South Boston), James Byrne (Dorchester), and Robert Travaglini (North End-Charlestown-East Boston) are all potential swing votes should a supplemental budget measure come before the Council. If you live in one of these councillors' districts, you are urged to call or write your councillor and ask support for restoration of the AIDS Action Committee grant.

— filed by Sue Hyde

school officials remove prom queen

TRENTON, OH — A gay youth here is suing his high school for removing him and his escort from his senior prom, according to Pittsburgh's *Out*.

Warren Harper, 19, was allegedly divine in a chiffon dress, fur cape, and satin pumps. His escort and sister, Florence Harper, was reportedly dapper in a tuxedo. School officials, however, were more concerned about conformity than Art, and had the couple removed within moments of their entrance. They then detained the fashion pioneers, against their wills, for the duration of the prom.

School officials argue that Harper was defying community norms by appearing in drag. Harper argues that they violated his civil rights by refusing to allow him to appear. In his suit, he charges the officials with violating his rights, assault and battery, intentional infliction of emotional harm, and false imprisonment.

Harper is an example to us all in explaining his decision to be beautiful: "I decided to say, hey, if girls can wear make-up to look better, why can't guys? If girls can paint their nails, which makes their hands look lovelier, why can't guys? If women wear hose to make their legs look better, men should too."

Rebecca Harper, mother of the dynamic duo, was upset over the incident, but feels the attendant publicity may help her son attain his dream: "He wants to be Miss Gay Ohio when he's 21. After that, he'd like to go on to Miss Gay USA."

— filed from Boston by Marcos Bisticas-Cocoves

boys with aids barred from classrooms

LOS ANGELES — A three-year-old boy who has AIDS has been barred from a class for handicapped children after parents said they feared he would infect other kids, according to the Los Angeles *Times*. The decision earlier this month followed a meeting between county school officials and 13 parents with children enrolled in pre-school programs at Alta Vista School.

According to Bob Grossman of the Los Angeles County Office of Education, parents said they were particularly concerned that the disease could be spread through the boy's saliva. While county and state health officials acknowledged there is no medical evidence to support that claim, Jim Chin of the state Department of Health Services (DHS) said, "[I]t will be difficult to convince parents of that."

Betty Agee, also of DHS, said the county adopted a policy last month encouraging schools to accept children with AIDS whose physicians have recommended that they enroll. Grossman, however, said that cases will be handled on a "case-by-case basis."

Grossman also claimed that the boy's foster parents, who have requested anonymity, "felt the most prudent way was to go with home instruction.... They empathized with the other parents, and had no desire to threaten other kids." Grossman said the parents were concerned the boy would not receive adequate attention because of publicity about the case and fears about AIDS.

The boy contracted AIDS as an infant from a blood transfusion, according to Grossman.

* * *

KOKOMO, IN — In a similar case, a 13-year-old boy has been banned from school after officials here learned he had contracted AIDS during treatment for hemophilia, according to the Baltimore *Sun*. The boy, Ryan White, has stayed home from Western Middle School since the end of December, 1984, but hoped to return this year pending new state guidelines. "Ryan's been robbed of a lot of things," said his mother, Jeanne White. "Ever since he's been diagnosed, we've had to fight for everything, and I guess it's going to keep going on."

James O. Smith, superintendent of the school, said July 31 that new guidelines released by the state health board regarding children with infectious diseases make it too difficult for the school to retain students such as Ryan. The guidelines say schools should monitor children with infectious diseases, keep rubber gloves, bleach and leak-proof bags available, and hire teachers familiar with such illnesses. "That sets up a situation we are not prepared to cope with in a school setting," asserted Smith. "That's a hospital situation."

Jeanne White disagrees strongly and said that dealing with AIDS is not that different from dealing with hemophilia. "It's not that extra amount of trouble they seem to be thinking it is," she said.

Smith has said the school will provide a tutor for Ryan if one can be found.

Jeanne White has filed a two-million dollar suit against the firm that made the clotting agent used to treat Ryan's hemophilia.

While the Centers for Disease Control have stressed that there is no evidence that AIDS can be transmitted through casual contact, no guidelines for schools dealing with students who have AIDS have been issued. Guidelines adopted in Florida, Connecticut, and Cambridge, Mass. recommend that children with AIDS, AIDS-related Complex (ARC), or HTLV-III positive tests remain in school, except in extreme circumstances. (See GCN, Vol. 12, No. 46.)

bwmt/sf aids task force established

SAN FRANCISCO — The Black and White Men Together (BWMT) AIDS Task Force, here has been meeting since June of this year. The Task Force focuses on promoting a higher awareness of safe sex precautions and other guidelines among the Black community and other communities of color not being reached by mainstream materials. The Task Force has met with the Shanti Project, which provides counseling, shelter, and support for people with AIDS in San Francisco, to discuss the problem of low representation of people of color among its staff and volunteers, and has helped start a Shanti support group for Third World people with AIDS.

Men of All Colors Together (MACT) of New York, previously BWMT/NY, is also proposing to establish an AIDS committee to focus on outreach to the Black, Asian, and Latino communities. The July 30 MACT/NY newsletter states, "We must keep in mind that 40 percent of people with AIDS are Third World, and that the need to fight this epidemic is intrinsically connected to addressing the issue of health care as a right of all peoples."

lesbians are new england's strongest

HOLYOKE, MA — For the second year in a row, two lesbians from Boston's South End Gym bested all contestants in the annual "New England's Strongest Men and Women" contest held here on July 28.

Cat Chase won the lightweight division with a 13' tire throw of 32'2", 100 yd. run carrying 90 lbs. in 22.79 seconds, 11 reps in the bench press with 125 lbs., 19 reps deadlifting with 225 lbs., and 27 bicep curls with 85 lbs.

Marie Acacia garnered top honors in the heavyweight class by tossing a 14" tire 28'5", running the hundred with 130 lbs. in 28.3 seconds, four reps benching with 150 lbs., a 275 lb. deadlift for 13 reps and one curl with 115 lbs.



Ellen Shub

witness for peace vigil

BOSTON — Responding to the recent abduction by Nicaraguan contras of 29 Witness for Peace members and 14 journalists (See GCN, Vol. 13, No. 6), the Pledge of Resistance held a two-hour vigil at the John F. Kennedy federal building here, Thursday, August 8. Approximately eighty people gathered from 8-10 p.m. to show support for those captured (whose release had not yet been confirmed), to draw attention to U.S.-sponsored contra violence, and to provide a gathering place for local friends and families of those abducted.

For much of the vigil, participants bore signs denouncing the contras, and stood silently holding candles. As part of a brief ecumenical ceremony, two speakers addressed the crowd. Reverend Lianne Teggert, coordinator of the Massachusetts Witness for Peace, explained that the group of 29 had entered the region bordering Costa Rica and Nicaragua to commemorate civilian Nicaraguans killed there by contras, to draw attention to the injustice in the area, and to pray for peace.

Christopher Kruegler, brother of kidnapped nun Catherine Kruegler, denounced U.S. support for the contras and noted the irony that Reagan approved congressional funding of the contras the day after the abduction, "without expressing any concern at all." Kruegler noted the contrast in government and press attention to those kidnapped aboard the TWA flight, and those in Costa Rica.

Kruegler also questioned the tactics of Witness for Peace, an interfaith group composed largely of church activists, calling for more dialogue about what he termed "symbolic" non-violent acts that may lack "a comprehensive strategy."

Since Thursday, Boston Witness for Peace has confirmed that the hostages were released unharmed. Reports still conflict over the identity of the captors, believed to be members of a contra group led by Eden Pastora, a former supporter of the Sandinista revolution.

— filed by Laurie Sherman

Trying to appease lesbians and gay men?

Dukakis Announces \$1.8 Million AIDS Grant

By Sue Hyde

BOSTON — Gov. Michael Dukakis, in a long overdue move, announced on August 10 \$1.8 million in state funds to support AIDS research, public education, and support services for AIDS patients. Dukakis also formally announced the creation of the Health Resource Office which will serve as a clearinghouse and center for statewide AIDS-related efforts. Included in the funding is a quarter of a million dollars for the AIDS Action Committee (AAC).

Dukakis' press conference at the Francis Blake Biological Laboratories, located in Massachusetts General Hospital, followed a months-long lobbying and educational effort by people who were concerned that the Governor's original draft of his 1986 budget contained no appropriation for AIDS. Last year, the state legislature voted to set aside \$1.1 million for AIDS research.

During formal and informal meetings with Dukakis aides and administrators, lesbian and gay activists and health care providers, including members of the governor's own State AIDS Task Force, pressed their point that the AIDS Crisis was not over and state resources were needed, both for research and patient services. Their persistence paid off; Dukakis and Secretary of Human Services Philip Johnston both referred to AIDS as the state's number one health care problem.

"I'm deeply and actively involved on all fronts in the fight against AIDS," Gov. Dukakis told a crowd of reporters. "We're all involved in this, as a community, as a people."

Dukakis said the commitment of money and energy was "just a

beginning." He pledged to work to create a partnership between federal and state governments to promote and coordinate AIDS research and services to people with AIDS. On August 4, at the National Governors' Association Human Resources Committee, Dukakis sponsored a unanimously-approved resolution calling for a state-federal partnership in fighting AIDS.

Included in the \$1.8 million designated for statewide AIDS efforts is \$1.1 million for 12 research projects; \$200,000 for the alternative testing sites program and protection of the blood supply; \$100,000 for establishing a Health Resources office, including the statewide AIDS coordinator and home care coordinator; and, finally, \$400,000 for education and prevention.

Included in the \$400,000 earmarked for education and prevention is \$250,000 for Boston's AIDS Action Committee (AAC). Larry Kessler, coordinator of the AAC, said the money would be used to educate at-risk populations, health care providers, and the general public about AIDS, and to provide support services to people with AIDS and their families.

Asked if the level of state funding was adequate, Kessler replied, "It's enough for where we are right now." In a later interview, Kessler said, "You can always hope for more [money]. But at this point, this is what we can use. And now we're in a position to document the needs for next year."

At the August 10 press conference, Kessler said that AIDS Action volunteers annually donate about \$500,000 worth of time performing vital support and educa-

tional work. While he noted a primarily volunteer response is not preferable, he commented that AIDS, as a new disease, was providing a new model for health care.

Because Governor Dukakis has lately come under heavy fire from gay and lesbian activists over his anti-gay foster care policy, some have speculated that his dramatic shift from disinterest in AIDS to "deep involvement" was motivated by a desire to ease his strained relations with the gay and lesbian community.

Human Services Secretary Johnston called that suggestion "ridiculous" in the August 11 *Boston Globe*. And gubernatorial press officer Geri Denterlein said, "Absolutely not.... This is not seen as a gesture toward the gay community. This has been in the pipeline for two and one-half years."

When asked why the initial budget had no line item for AIDS, Denterlein said, "When the budget comes back from the printer, there are glitches. When the Governor saw it, he filed an amendment."

Asked what role members of the lesbian and gay community had played in the process, Denterlein said she was not aware that any role had been played by lesbian and gay activists.

But Vin McCarthy, a gay attorney and candidate for the Eighth Congressional District seat being vacated by Rep. Tip O'Neill, told *GCN* that it was at a January meeting with Secretary Johnston and others that Johnston had become convinced AIDS funding should be provided by the state.

McCarthy said he does not see any relationship between Dukakis'

about-face on AIDS and his intransigence on the foster care policy. "He sees intellectually the issue of gay rights," McCarthy said, "but not emotionally."

One source contacted by *GCN* who wished to remain anonymous speculated that Dukakis may have waited to act on AIDS funding until he perceived a shift in public opinion about AIDS. By doing so, he would minimize possible damage incurred if he were to be seen as too strong an advocate for AIDS funding and, by inference, for the gay community.

Cathy Hoffman, a member of

the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee, the group organizing opposition to the foster care policy, vowed that her group would not desist. "Of course we wholeheartedly support funding for AIDS research and money for patient services. But this is a separate issue from a foster care policy which discriminates against lesbians, gay men, single parents, and working mothers.... We made it clear to the governor when we met with him [on June 20] that we would not be bought off by his support for issues which he should support anyway."

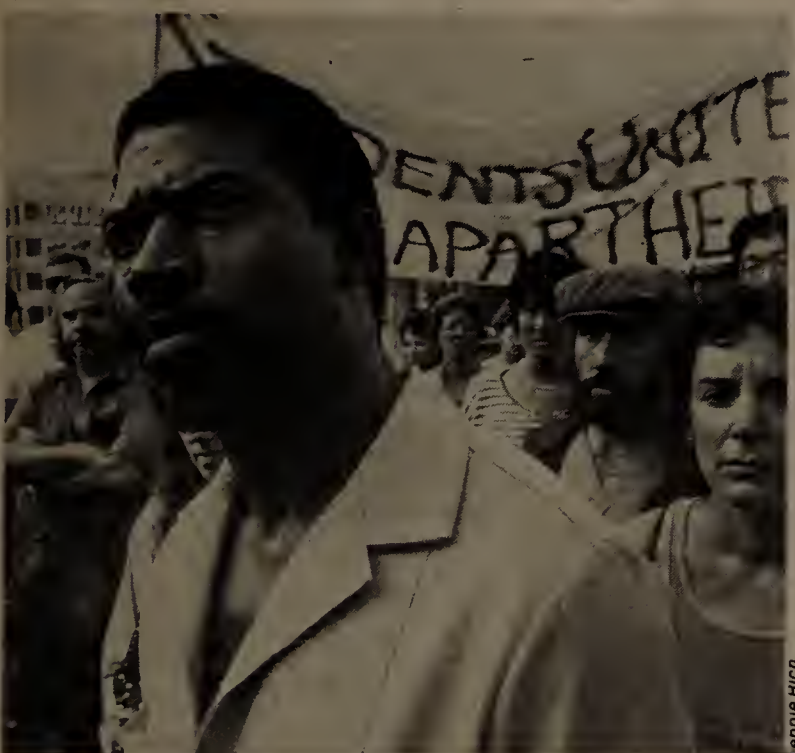


BOSTON — Approximately 50 people gathered at the Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union Hall here on August 14 for the first meeting of the Boycott Coors Task Force. A diverse group, including many lesbians and gay men, as well as trade unionists and Central America activists, briefly discussed the history of the infamous brewery and its lesser-known subsidiary in arms manufacturing, the Coors Porcelain Company. The participants then organized committees to do research on local distributors and retailers, produce literature, and do outreach and media work. The task force plans to meet again shortly after Labor Day; for information on the exact date and location of that meeting, watch the *GCN* calendar or call Local 26 at (617) 423-3335.

— Larry Goldsmith

Apartheid

Continued from page 1



Demonstrator listening to speaker at anti-apartheid rally, Boston, August 8.

Pickets and sit-ins at offices of Deak-Perera across the country have been relentless for several months, resulting in frequent shutdowns of the business. Deak-Perera's suspension, however, will be reviewed pending the U.S. Senate's vote next month on legislation that would ban imports of the Krugerrand.

Rally emcee Fahamisha Brown called for a boycott of Granny Smith apples, noting that 90 percent of the apples in the U.S. are purchased from South Africa. Shoppers can verify the origin of their market's apples by asking to see the store's crates; crates from South Africa are marked "Cape."

The march and rally took place specifically to denounce the current state of emergency imposed by the South African government on July 21, granting police the power to arrest and detain Black people without providing legal counsel or filing formal charges. Over 1600 Black people in South Africa have been arrested since July 21, according to the *New York Times*. Many of those released have said they were tortured during imprisonment and interrogation by police. Over 600 Black people have been killed during active opposition to apartheid in the past year, also according to the *New York Times*.

Political change of heart questioned

Gay Bar Sponsors Benefit for Jimmy Kelly

By Christine Guilfoxy

BOSTON — A recent fundraiser at a gay bar for city councillor James Kelly (South Boston-South End) raised eyebrows in some parts of the gay and lesbian community but is staunchly defended by its organizers. The fundraiser, held July 21 at the Haymarket bar, was a success, according to one of the bar's owners. Joe McCallion said he was uncertain about the amount of money raised, but said many of the attendees were "neighbors from the South End and they aren't necessarily gay."

Observers who attend the bar say it is one of the most racially mixed in the city and one where a variety of gay people feel comfortable.

However, the fundraiser for Kelly in a gay bar is bound to raise questions, at least in the minds of some.

Kelly, a conservative from South Boston, is best known for his leadership in the anti-busing movement of the 1970s. While Kelly maintains he was fighting to maintain the autonomy and integrity of his neighborhood, others have charged that his stands are bigoted and racist.

When McCallion was asked about the appropriateness of having a fundraiser for Kelly, who in the past had opposed various anti-discrimination ordinances, McCallion pointed to Kelly's recent vote in favor of the Human Rights Ordinance as evidence of Kelly's willingness to work with gay peo-

ple.

An issue which has become the focus of much of the political organizing in Boston and is, in the eyes of many, a litmus test of support for gay and lesbian rights, is the foster care issue. Recently, two gay men, Donald Babets and David Jean, had their foster children removed from their home following publicity in the local media. As a result of the incident, the Department of Social Services (DSS) developed a policy which prioritizes acceptable family types and places gay people at the bottom of the list for placement. (See *GCN*, Vol. 12, Nos. 43-50.)

McCallion told *GCN*, "Jimmy [Kelly] was in my house when we had two [foster] children placed in my home." But in a later interview, Paul Walkowski, an aide to Kelly, said the councillor supported the new policy and was against allowing the children to stay with the two gay men. But Walkowski maintained that it is not a bottom-line issue, saying "[As far as] basic human rights, he never denied anybody that."

McCallion maintained that some gay people dislike Kelly because of his conservative political outlook, but he said many feel comfortable supporting him. "I think he is supportive of gay people...but, say, the grape pickers of America, he doesn't necessarily support them."

But others have maintained that Kelly cannot be supported under any circumstances because he has

not had a change of heart. For example, in early 1984, councillor Kelly was one of two people who asked to have his name removed from a resolution expressing sympathy over the death of Clarence Mitchell of the NAACP. Kelly said he wanted to disassociate himself from the resolution because he believes the NAACP is a "racist organization."

More recently, when the newly formed Human Rights Commission had its first budget hearings before the council, Kelly pushed newly appointed executive director Fred Mandel on the commission's philosophy. Kelly reacted against the commission's request for money to advertise and print brochures which would explain the new ordinance and the existence of the commission. It's one thing to be available to take complaints, Kelly told Mandel, but "another thing to go out and drum up business, creating problems where problems do not exist." While Kelly's questioning often sounded insensitive to the aims of the commission, gay activist and city councillor David Scondras said he believed Kelly was merely "testing the director's mettle."

As the new political season moves into full swing, with the primary elections to be held in September, the questions about who we support, and why, will be debated again and again in our community.

Community Voices

Local Reporter

GCN seeks a full-time Local Reporter to begin on or about October 1, 1985. Position involves investigating, researching, and writing news stories concerning Boston area/New England and, as necessary, national news stories as well. Additionally, will participate in the paper's collective decision-making process.

Qualifications: Strong writing skills and ability to write several news stories under weekly deadline pressures. Knowledge of local/national gay/lesbian community and issues helpful. Must have commitment to gay/lesbian liberation, feminism, anti-racist politics, and the collective decision-making process.

Salary: \$150/week, plus paid health/life insurance, three weeks' paid vacation.

To apply: Please send resume and cover letter as soon as possible to: Reporter Search Committee, GCN, 167 Tremont St. 5th Floor, Boston, MA 02111.

Gay men and lesbians of color are particularly encouraged to apply.

we had nothing

Dear GCN:

As one of the 17 older gay men whose life stories comprise Keith Vacha's book *Quiet Fire*, Donald Stone's review in your July 13th issue was touchingly sincere. Especially moving was his concern about the fact that so many of us had been married, seen therapists, had been rejected by younger men and, by his lights, were politically conservative. It was clear he found it all distressing and perplexing.

It's all quite simple. Sometimes I feel as if the primary activity of gay activists is denouncing other gay activists. What none of them realize is how lucky they are to have a group at all to criticize. We had nothing. We were isolated individuals who knew a few friends and that was it. There was no gay media whatsoever, everything was communicated by rumor via word-of-mouth. You had to find your way alone. The straight media ignored us completely excepting when a salacious scandal was involved. The legal, religious and social situation was precisely as it still is in all too many places. The therapists were the only nonhostile group but they said we were sick and complained that most homosexuals were satisfied with their condition and wouldn't come to be cured. There was no one to look up to and emulate. Plato had been dead for over two thousand years and Andre Gide was in France. As concerns marriage, the pressures to marry had to be experienced to be comprehended. If possible, it was even worse for the women than the men. A vice clean-up has to be lived through before you know what it's like. Under the circumstances and considering the fact that you never knew when the law would tap you on the shoulder, it's not astonishing we sometimes needed therapy.

Conservatism is a relative phenomenon. If it hadn't happened to you, you knew people who'd received dishonorable discharges from the military during World War II. The McCarthy period was an indescribable, unending nightmare. No one, no matter how highly placed, was safe. Consequently, hiding had to become the order of the day for most of us. Those of us who joined the Mattachine Society or One Foundation in the 50's were regarded as wild-eyed radicals and could count on being ostracized. You were also risking jeopardizing your career if you did so. By contemporary standards we were nothing drastic as rebels, at that period to try to do anything was supremely rebellious, as well as dangerous for all.

That younger gay men often reject us is all too true. This is a youth-oriented country and gay men mirror the universal attitude towards older persons. I know of no solution for it. Upon occasion members of the G40 Plus Club and I have given group talks to lesbian and gay college students. Invariably, when the talk was opened to questions the younger people froze up and none of them could say a word. It was as if they had felt they were the entire lesbian-gay world. When they encountered a group of us en masse they had no categories with which to cope with us and their minds turned off.

In any event, Mr. Stone's concern and perturbation were deeply appreciated.

Yours truly,
Jordan Lee
San Francisco, CA

confronting racism and anti-semitism

An Open Letter to Elly Bulkin and Mini Bruce Pratt:

On April 14th, we went to hear you discuss racism and anti-Semitism in the lesbian community with the expectation that your experiences in working together on these issues would raise our consciousness. Instead we found ourselves both confused at and angered by your failure to break out of your own personal experiences — self-identified as a southern white Christian lesbian and a white Jewish lesbian — to talk to your diverse audience. We ourselves include three blacks, two Jews of Eastern European descent, and a white Gentile; all of us are lesbians, representing diverse classes and ranging from ages 23 to 39.

As one of us said during the discussion period, those of us who were black felt marginalized by talks that seemed directed at middle class white women. We wondered if you had expected our presence and what you had to say to us about racism and anti-Semitism. On the one hand we felt that as women who have faced white racism all our lives we knew how you had learned your racism. (Don't the oppressed always know more about the oppressor? After all our mothers worked in your kitchens.) On the other hand, we felt that the historical construction of our anti-Semitism was so different from others that ignoring these differences made our experiences invisible once again.

All of us felt that you didn't live up to the responsibilities that your framework implied; we expected you to address the complexities of racism and anti-Semitism in various parts of the lesbian community. We also felt that your presentation stifled effective dialogue among peoples of color, Jews, and all working class women. We write you this open letter because some of us felt angry at and hurt by your presentation and we want to open up a dialogue on ways many feminists and lesbians choose to work on racism and anti-Semitism.

Both of you spoke from a perspective that some have called identity politics. This approach began as a way for black women to create space for themselves in feminist and black movements by asserting their identity. It has evolved into a framework that recognizes difference but builds barriers rather than bridges among us by not also discussing ways we learn from each other or ways we are connected. In part this problem stems from the assumption embedded in identity politics that anti-Semitism, racism and other forms of oppression are attributes of people. By failing to move beyond the personal or individual level it is often difficult if not impossible to view issues in a complex way. It denies the power of history and society in shaping our consciousness, particularly our anti-Semitism and racism.

While we recognize the importance of admitting privileges we may gain because of how we are identified or how we identify ourselves, we also feel a responsibility to move beyond ourselves to take in other peoples' experiences. To reach beyond our privileges demands resisting the tendency to establish ourselves as experts and instead requires creating forums where we are open to challenges. In a society where white culture dominates, spending too much time examining skin and class privileges takes away from the space and time for others to assert their presence. We expected you, Elly and Mini Bruce, to have been influenced by your work in multi-racial coalitions and to have developed an analysis that reflects the diversity of these groups. For example, you could have talked about how you have been influenced by working with Barbara Smith.

The definitions and assumptions about race and class that you used in your talks are disconnected from the diversity of daily experiences of the range of peoples we represent. Furthermore narrow oppositions between white and black perpetuate racism by concealing the complexity of racial and ethnic identities and intermingling. Jews, for example, are all races and a black/white opposition tragically dismisses people of color who are not black.

While we address this letter to you, we hope that the organizers would take responsibility prior to the event and as the event unfolds to carefully consider whether or not the event is addressing all members of the participating community. We also feel that such events addressing anti-Semitism and racism could facilitate further dialogue in our communities and act as a natural context for coalition building, moving beyond words to action.

La Lutta Continua,
Paula Ebron
Myrna James
Helen Moores
Rachel Tallen
Frances White
Elise Young
Amherst, MA

GCN welcomes letters to the editor. If possible, they should be TYPED and DOUBLESPPACED, and where possible limited to five typed pages. They should be sent to: Community Voices, GCN, 167 Tremont St. #5, Boston, MA 02111.

write and gripe

Dear GCN:

Andy Waghalter, producer and host of *Gay TV*, taped a statement for broadcast on the *Today Show*. The taping was a result of his having written a brief letter protesting reporter Ken Bodie's referring to the Democratic Gay/Lesbian Caucus as "notorious." Mr. Waghalter said, "Notorious! You call an oppressed minority working for justice within the system 'notorious?'" What alternatives do you leave them? If you in the media cannot help create a society where gays and lesbians can feel free to be themselves, they may feel such pressure to pretend to be straight that they end up marrying your sons or daughters. Oppression hurts us all."

This statement was heard by over 8 million people. This multiplies out to over five solid years of being listened to. Mr. Waghalter told *The Works News Magazine* "writing letters does help influence our society and it makes you feel better by fighting back in a constructive way. All gays and lesbians should be writing protest letters to politicians and the media. They do not HAVE to be signed. Why should you take abuse and just sit there? WRITE AND GRIPE.

Gregory McDaniel
Martinsville, IN

oversimplified story

Dear GCN:

I was greatly disappointed by Chris Guilfooy's article "Gay Men Challenge Dentists on AIDS, Hep B" in GCN on 8/3/85. She called me to comment on the complaint filed with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination and we talked for about half an hour. The quotes she chose to use in her article are one-sided and oversimplify the issues. I think that dentists have a difficult problem and need to rapidly develop a national policy, much the same way that hospitals and medical societies have, regarding the management of persons with various types of AIDS-related infections and neoplasms. In talking to Chris, I tried to raise questions about the consistency of certain attitudes with practice, but I stressed to her the need to talk to national dental officials as to whether there is a policy being formulated and if so, what is it.

I also told her how the Public Health Service feels that HTLV-III/LAV can be inactivated from inanimate objects and suggested that she call some of the dentists. She told me that she had a deadline. Unfortunately, that meant she did a slipshod job, superficially covering a new and difficult issue. She did not deal with the issues of whether dentists and hygienists should wear masks to protect themselves from aerosols, whether disposable equipment can be substituted in appropriate situations, and whether some of the equipment could be autoclaved. I told Chris that she should contact some of the local and national virologists to see what further information and opinions could be brought into this discussion.

This was not a fast-breaking story. It deserved a more detailed analysis. I feel quoted out of context and I feel that you simplistically misrepresented the valid concerns that the dental community is expressing. There are no clear-cut truths yet, so that a better, more thoroughly researched article would have been more of a community service. The polemical piece you produced was unfair.

Kenneth H. Mayer
Boston, MA

bagly turns five

Dear GCN:

We the members of the Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth would like to express our heartfelt thanks to those members of our community who have come through once again to help BAGLY survive and grow. This July marks the FIFTH YEAR of BAGLY's existence. BAGLY's 5th Anniversary Party was held last weekend at Somewhere Else on Franklin St. through the generosity of Ann Maguire of Somewhere Else and Robin McCormack of Buddies. They donated the space and staff to make BAGLY's 5th a special occasion indeed right down to the cutting of the cake!

Both Robin and Ann have been with and stuck by BAGLY through all of our 5 years and have shown us the true spirit of the community in everything they've done for us, both directly and through their support of the whole lesbian/gay community. They deserve both the respect and admiration of all of us they have so faithfully served as present and past Liaisons to the Lesbian and Gay Community of Boston.

Our thanks also goes out to the staff of Somewhere Else who were so generous with their time and facilities. They truly made our 5th Anniversary a memory to treasure.

In the past, BAGLY has had its annual Anniversary celebrations in Buddies' Disco, but due to the damage done by the recent fire in their building, we were forced to look for alternative space. Robin and the staff of Buddies were of great help in coordinating with Ann and the staff of Somewhere Else to get our celebration off the ground.

Again, our gratitude goes out to them all.

Sincerely yours for BAGLY,
George E. Smith; advisor and Corresponding Secretary
Boston, MA

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Speaking Out

Sex More Punished Than Murder

By Robert Butler

Five years ago I was sentenced to 21 life sentences plus another ten year sentence, for sexual "assault." These charges were fabricated and were not actual happenings. In 180 years I can be considered for release. Murder is a common and macho crime here [in Nevada] and it usually calls for five to seven years. I was sentenced for loving a boy below the age of consent. I loved him, fed him, clothed him and nurtured him. He is a gay boy. Two lives have been devastated.

This 13 year-old boy was brutalized, harassed and threatened for a month before he was coerced into signing a complaint against me written by a juvenile detective.

The judge needed a case with the potential for great emotional impact to gain media coverage for his political career. He was running for a judgeship on the Nevada Supreme Court. Nicky and I were in the wrong place at the wrong time. We were available, vulnerable, and expendable for political grist. Bail was set at \$220,000 to assure that I would have no chance to get a competent lawyer. I was assigned a lawyer who was openly homophobic.

I had been training Nicky for two years to work in my widely known acrobatic act. The type of act required boys as what we call "topmounters." He was by far the most talented and all around most suitable boy who had worked in my act in forty years. I was 59 years old and prepared for my last tour of Europe and elsewhere. Prior to my arrest we had a six month preliminary tour under contract. My act was never better.

There was no preparation for my trial. The lawyer refused to spend any time with me. She made no investigation and no witnesses were interviewed. It was my lawyer's second jury trial. The trial took five days. It was a fiasco. It was even delayed once so a member of the jury could compete in the barrel racing at a local rodeo. If the public defender I was assigned had been properly prepared, she could have easily discredited all of the prosecution's witnesses who didn't even know the plaintiff. My witnesses were not questioned to my advantage. Physical evidence in my attorney's possession was not presented to the jury. A promised expert witness was not called nor even sought. I knew that I was being railroaded but I was helpless. The judge was playing to a jury of registered voters.

On Friday of that week after a pathetic summation on the part of my attorney, the jury took three and a half hours to find me guilty on all counts.

Although the trial was over, I took steps to dismiss my ineffectual counsel. The judge tried to prevent me from doing so. A court officer had come to me twice during the trial and

told me that by any desperate means I should get a private attorney. A friend borrowed \$500 on his life insurance and hired me an attorney to represent me at the sentencing. The judge wouldn't allow him time to even interview me. I was sentenced to the most draconian sentence ever handed down in this state for less than a capital crime. The sentence was rendered on a Friday. The following Monday the judge announced his candidacy for Nevada's Supreme Court. Fortunately he lost the election.

A young lawyer, Laura Fitzsimmons, had been a law clerk in the Nevada Supreme Court when my case was heard on appeal. She read my trial transcript. Now in the local public defender's office, she asked to take my case. She has since gone into private practice but she has retained my case.

I went into court four months ago and Laura did an excellent job in interrogating my former lawyer who had been subpoenaed. We did not get finished with the hearing. The local judge postponed the remainder of the hearing. He was going on vacation. I go back to court on September 9th. At the close of the hearing the judge will take it under submission for another long delay. His decision will be negative, but it will enable us to go on to the Nevada Supreme Court and if necessary to the 9th Circuit Court in San Francisco.

I spent three years trying to get a non-homophobic lawyer before Laura Fitzsimmons showed up. I tried to get help from all of the gay legal groups. Most did not show me the courtesy of a reply. I must assume they lacked the courage to help in such a case. Things will drag on for a long while before we get to a higher court. We would like some *amicus curiae* support from the gay community. A "friend of the court" brief would be a great help and most appreciated. It would also allow me to believe in the solidarity of my own people and in their courage. We could furnish a transcript to any gay lawyer or legal group who would help. My prison address is: Robert Butler, PO Box 607, Carson City, NV 89701.

"Speaking Out" is part of our continuing effort to provide a true forum of opinion for the community. We encourage you to send your ideas, feelings and comments to us and we encourage you to respond to any ideas expressed in this space. Submissions to "Speaking Out" should be TYPED and DOUBLE SPACED, and, if possible, held to under 5 pages in length. The opinions expressed in "Speaking Out" do not necessarily reflect the views of the newspaper, the staff or the advertisers. Write c/o Speaking Out, GCN, 167 Tremont St., 5th Fl., Boston, MA 02111



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Defense Committee Update

Department of Social Services hearings on foster care policy are set for Thursday, August 22 from 3-9 p.m. at U/Mass Medical Center in Worcester. It is critical that gay men and lesbians present testimony in opposition to the state policy. Carpooling/buses will be arranged. Call 628-6007 or 628-6145 if you intend to go. Bring a written statement if you plan to testify. Send a copy to the Gay and Lesbian Defense Committee, PO Box 225, Somerville, MA 02144. If you cannot attend, mail your testimony to GLDC.

Write DSS Commissioner Marie Matava, 150 Causesway Street, Boston, MA 02144, to demand another hearing be held in Boston with four to six weeks' notice, since inadequate notice was provided for the Worcester hearing. Send a copy of your letter to GLDC.

Dukakis Watch: Tuesday, August 27, noon to 2 p.m., a silent picket at groundbreaking ceremony, Roxbury Community College, corner of Dudley and Columbus.... **Speakers' Training** is set for Sunday, September 8 at 6 p.m. Call 576-6788 for details.

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Prologue
There are those who think
or perhaps don't think
that children and lesbians
together can't make a family
that we create an extension
of perversion
They think
or perhaps don't think
that we have different relationships
with our children
that instead of getting up
in the middle of the night
for a 2 AM and a 6 AM feeding
we rise up and chant
'you're gonna be a dyke
you're gonna be a dyke.'
That we feed our children
lavender Simlac
and by breathing our air
the children's genitals distort
and they become hermaphrodites.
They ask
'What will you say to them
what will you teach them?'
Child
that would be mine
I bring you my world
and bid it be yours.
— from "Legacy," by Pat Parker

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Black & White Men Together Fifth Annual Conference

Continued from page 1

you have to do it by example...."

Perry Watkins, a Black man who was discharged without benefits from the U.S. army after 17 years, described military procedures regarding gay people. Watkins had stated at the time of his induction that he had "homosexual tendencies" and was ruled suitable at the time. Watkins summed up current policy as: "If you say you are gay, you must be discharged. If you are found in gay acts, you may be discharged."

Bayard Rustin, board chairman of the A. Philip Randolph Institute and a long-time civil rights activist, received NABWMT's Lifetime Achievement Award for Outstanding Contributions to Mankind. Citing biblical injunctions, fears of child molestation, and its "anti-family" connotation, Rustin called homosexuality "the most difficult human rights problem of all." Rustin stressed the need for gay men assembled to seek an end to injustice directed towards all oppressed groups and to work in a coalition to achieve that end.

"Discrimination is a single piece of cloth. If you hate Jews, you automatically hate Blacks; if you hate Blacks, you automatically hate gays; if you automatically hate gays, then there's no

possibility of you being honest with women. If you want to get at the basic problem of all, since it is one piece of cloth, select the one which is the most hated, deal with that and you'd automatically deal with the whole proposition.

"The fundamental objective of the gay movement is to recognize that it is central to the elimination of all other propositions of injustice. Our objective is to eliminate the concept of top and bottom."

Rustin used his own life as an example of oppressed groups banding together. When Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-SC) denounced Rustin as a homosexual, a draft dodger, and a communist on the eve of the 1963 March on Washington, members of the U.S. Japanese community, the Jewish community, and leaders of several African countries all rushed to his defense. "If you want to defend yourself ultimately as a person who is gay, you do not defend it on the basis that gayness is good, you defend it on the basis that you, as gay people, have stood up for the rights of *all* people," Rustin concluded.

Whether or not baths should be closed because of AIDS was debated during the conference. Arguing in favor of closure, Jim

Kepler of the National Gay Archives said, "Gay liberation means a little more than how much you're getting." Ivy Bottini, a lesbian feminist active in Los Angeles' AIDS Project, maintained, "People with AIDS go to baths and don't acknowledge having it...or anything else." Bruce Voeller and Nathan Woodruff cited the loss of the baths as an important educational setting and the inadequacy of legislation as a prevention mechanism as two reasons not to close the baths.

A second debate focused on whether the organization's name was racially inhibiting. The Denver chapter has changed its name twice, and the New York chapter is now known as Men of All Colors Together.

In a separate caucus, Black delegates discussed the display of Confederate battle flags by members of the Atlanta chapter. Some delegates pointed out the flag's historical association with racism. In an emotional interchange, one delegate who grew up in a small, Southern town said, "When I saw that flag, I saw the faces of my grandmother and grandfather, with lines of pain etched in their faces, pain that had been imposed on their lives. I remember the day the news of

Martin Luther King's murder reached us in Vietnam. Some white soldiers raised the Confederate flag all over the base and hosted a celebration."

"The confederate flag and the swastika are one and the same," claimed another delegate. "The pain of its memory and persecution is just as strong. You cannot round the edges of a swastika if you are a Jew, any more than you can round the edges of the Confederate flag if you are Black. To raise either flag, knowing the pain it causes, is criminal."

Other BWMT members defended the Atlanta chapter, citing its work on bar ID legislation and acknowledging the difference had a white Southerner used the flag. Other discussion centered around a Latino delegate's overhearing a comment that he, the Latino man, had "deserted the whites" in his participation in the name-change debate.

The white caucus examined the economics of relationships between men of different races, and the impact of different educational levels and dialects on relationships, and briefly discussed the Confederate flag issue.

In setting priorities for the coming year, the Board of Representatives identified five major goals:

NABWMT's discrimination response systems, maintenance of struggling chapters, outreach to new members, AIDS and other health concerns, and leadership development. In other action, the board approved affiliation with the International Gay Association, endorsed a bill proposed by Rep. John Conyers (D-MI) setting uniform and less stringent federal election ballot laws allowing more access for minor parties (over the dissent of some who questioned the value of this level of political involvement), and adopted an internal reorganization plan.

Two local chapters were lauded for special projects they had introduced: BWMT-Philadelphia in conjunction with the Philadelphia AIDS Task Force cut a rap record entitled "Respect Yourself" which has been played on the radio and at area discos patronized by Black gay men; in Memphis, the BWMT affiliate is fundraising to produce a short film on a proposed American Civil Rights Center.

Co-chairs John Bush and Tim Wilson and secretary Wendell Roberson were re-elected to second terms, and Colin Gibson was elected treasurer.

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An Urban Anger: Jews, Blacks, and a Young Butchette

The Changelings

"Jo Sinclair" (Ruth Seid)
Feminist Press, Old Westbury, NY, 1985
\$8.95, 352 pp.

Reviewed by Pam Mitchell

I first heard of this long-out-of-print novel in 1981, when Barbara Smith recommended it to a group of feminists discussing race and class. I've been hoping to track down a copy ever since, and so was enthused when I discovered this Feminist Press reprint.

The book didn't disappoint me. Ruth Seid (writing under the name Jo Sinclair) tells a tale I could feel at home in — a story permeated by early-adolescent female angst and cluttered with homey detail about working-class life. At the same time, in only 300-plus pages she speaks volumes about the dynamics of a particular era of U.S. history, describing the interplay of racism, ethnic boundaries, class antagonisms, and sexual stratification in shaping the post-World War II urban landscape while squeezing from her own characters as many signs of heroic resistance to divisive and stratifying forces as they can reasonably muster, given their circumstances. And she does all this with a minimum of self-consciousness, rhetoric, and oversimplification.

Setting the story in a Midwestern, mostly-Jewish urban neighborhood which is about to change from all-white to racially mixed, the author jumps from household to household and viewpoint to viewpoint, offering a variety of (white) working-class "windows on the world" rare in U.S. fiction. Oddly, though, the generous viewpoint-hopping halts abruptly whenever Black characters appear, with Blacks seen only through white eyes and never in Black environments. Whether this was an artistic device to heighten the sense of community versus "otherness" — a theme central to the novel — or a reflection of the incapacity of the white author to "enter" Black skin, it weakens the impact and credibility of the book.

Ultimately, the book's many subplots and major characters are grounded and threaded together by the experiences of its main protagonist, a going-on-13-year-old Jewish "tomboy" named Judy Vincent ("Vincent" to her street-gang; *schwartzte kuter*, "the black alleycat," to the rest of the neighborhood). The novel is Vincent's coming-of-age tale, and maintains a sentimental, optimistic-yet-worldly tone consistent with this adolescent "butchette." (My faith in Vincent's future-dyke potential was bolstered when I learned that another novel by the same author — entitled *The Wasteland* — has an overtly lesbian theme and major lesbian character.) Equally, it is the tale of a white working-class community torn asunder by its own racism and its own upward mobility — largely realized in that era as outward mobility to the suburbs.

The novel begins at a pivotal moment both for its young protagonist and for the neighborhood. Suddenly 12-year-old Vincent runs up against a united front of violent male resistance from the same neighborhood kids who took her leadership for granted when she was younger. The following scene depicts a coup in which her erstwhile best friend and "snitching" (shoplifting) buddy Dave takes over her position as gang leader — a scene culminating in a physical assault with sexual overtones. It is a succinct and painful study of an adolescent girl learning "her place" the hard way:

"Hey, who the hell do you think you are?" Dave went on scornfully. "A guy?"

It was an accusation. She had never actually called herself a boy, but neither had she ever thought of herself as one of the girls she despised for their soft, plaintiff weakness. She was simply Vincent, with the proud right to walk with the strong.... As she turned away, with her old disdain, she was stunned to see that the other faces reflected Dave's ugly laughter....She



Gilda Hannah

turned, shouted, "Lay off!...This is my gang."

"The hell it is," he said. "No girl's going to be my boss." [pp. 16-17]

Suddenly, too, Vincent is forced to make lonely, frightening decisions to combat the bigotry she sees engulfing her neighborhood: bigotry that would prevent a natural alliance between her and her counterpart, Clara Jackson, a Black girl her age who has witnessed her humiliation and offers her knife as protection from the boys; bigotry that would separate her from her sister Shirley and nephew Manny, because Shirley is married to a gentile; bigotry that could burn down her house and force her from the neighborhood.

The neighborhood, too, is on the verge, with more and more unrented apartments obstinately sitting empty against a wave of Blacks desperate for housing. The novel opens:

"It was July, it was August, it was almost September; still the heat would not budge out of the street, nor lift much after the sun went down. And still the black people walked up and down...from the dead end back to the corner, until the entire fantasy of heat and alien color and unuttered threat seemed to have been there forever.

"Then suddenly, on the third of September, the Rosens moved out of the Zigman's upstairs suite. A third house was open to the enemy." [p. 1]

Astute sociologist and inveterate bigot Mr. Levine, the tough, cynical father of some of Vincent's cohorts, sees the writing on the wall:

"It is one of America's habits. And it always goes the same way. First a few Jews with money move. Then some of the Italians start getting nervous, so they move, too — they always follow the Jews, you know. Then the gentiles start running. And the Jews without money? If they're frightened enough, they go, too. They mortgage their old age to the 80th year, but they go! And all the while, more and more of the Black Ones sneak in." [p. 40] (Seid translates the Yiddish *die schwartzte* as "the Black Ones" throughout the novel.)

Mr. Levine's interpretation is juxtaposed with a detailed description of actual events affecting the Jews in the neighborhood — rich relatives and community institutions moving to the affluent suburbs and abandoning those who can't or won't follow. It is clearly less painful and less risky for those left behind to blame the demise of their community on *die schwartzte* — outsiders less powerful than themselves — than to blame it on the other most obvious (though not

necessarily any more appropriate) options: on themselves for their failure to make enough money to follow, or on their fellow Jews — their uncles, brothers, rabbis, leaders — for walking out on them.

There are a few people in the book capable of seeing beyond this scapegoating and beyond the insider/outsider mentality that fosters it. These people, the hope of the future, are dubbed "the changelings" by Jules Golden, Vincent's bedridden poet friend, in the following poem:

"Let us know that we speak a different language of dreams, of thought,

Of love — we children who are never their children in the heart.

Yes, though they feed us with bread made of their fears and ignorance,

We cannot grow into their dark images:

We are changelings in our hearts, we must be free." [p. 304]

Despite Seid's optimism in naming the book after Jules' romantic fantasy, she is a hard-headed realist. These would-be "changelings" are hardly paragons of virtue. Jules' own passionate opposition to racism stems largely from self-pitying identification with people he sees as victims, and he uses it sadistically to torment his mother. Vincent's anti-racism is not fueled by the same bitterness and fear of death as Jules', but by the intelligent self-interest of a sharp teenager: in addition to being hurtful to others, racism is clearly a stupid way to cope with the shit coming down for being a Jew, a girl, a poor person. Dave, Vincent's former best friend and her main assailant in the violently sexist scene described above, partly redeems himself in Vincent's eyes when he allies with her to help a brutalized Black man, but he continues to cash in on being a male. (In fact, in several instances Seid is more willing than I would be to let some schmucky males off the moral hook, despite her feisty female characters and her clear understanding of male dominance.)

And Clara is also seen as a changeling. One of the major weaknesses of the book is that white and Black experiences of, and resistance to, racism are presented as parallel. When Clara speaks of her father's bitterness and rage at "those white people," she is referring to feelings generated by a succession of real slumlords and white creeps. Yet somehow his anger is presented as the moral equivalent of the anti-Black sentiments expressed by Vincent's family and neighbors; and Clara's willingness to relate with some whites winds up looking less like a gift of tremendous faith and courage than like a simple act of rebellion against her father, just like the white kids' rebellions against their elders.

This coupled with the distance the author maintains from her Black characters sometimes brings the book ominously close to the "good-white-liberal" brand of racism. Referring to some of Jules Golden's writings, Vincent says of Clara, "This girl had just made the poems real. She had put people's faces in them, and crying and cursing. She herself seemed to have jumped out of one of those poems." (p. 130) Unfortunately, right up to the end Clara does seem more like an illustration of a well-intentioned white person's poetic imagination than like a full-blooded person in her own right.

The politics of this novel are not above reproach, then. And its prose is less than perfect. The book sometimes lacks grace. Occasionally its author loses control, with too much going on at once, too many characters and plot-twists to keep track of.

Yet even with its flaws, this is an exciting and unusual venture. I have personal as well as political and literary reasons for appreciating it. Of particular interest to me as someone Jewish on one side of my family, raised working-class but isolated from other Jews, is the book's grasp of some of the forces — the internal cleavages over class differences, the desire for "the good life," the white racist flight from the *die schwartzte* — which shattered Jewish working-class community in the

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Adult / Youth Sex as Fiction, Fact and Fate

Saul's Book

Paul T. Rogers
Penguin Books, New York, 1983
\$6.95, 314 pp.

Reviewed by Mark McHarry

Last September 21, Paul Rogers, former school teacher and social worker, was found dead in his New York apartment. He was killed by his adopted son, to whom he dedicated his first novel, *Saul's Book*. The youth and a friend allegedly bludgeoned Rogers to death in order to raid his bank account to buy drugs.¹

The circumstances of Rogers' demise form a fitting epitaph to his life, and an ironic epilogue to his book. Following as they do a work laced with irony and despair, they may have been unexpected, but they were not surprising.

Saul's Book is a gripping and bleak account of New York, of the people who inhabit Times Square, and above all, of the relationship between a streetwise youth named Sinbad and his domineering man friend, Saul. Superbly written, it raises provocative questions about man/boy relationships.

Rogers gives us striking portraits of Saul, an intellectual, middle-aged con artist who is as addicted to booze as he is to sloth, and of Sinbad, a prostitute at 12, strung out on a variety of drugs, and battling inner demons — chief among them his older lover's indifference. Each hustles his lover, the world-at-large, and ultimately himself in order to survive.

The author charts Sinbad's course from the time he is an 11-year-old boy, fully aware of his beauty, until he becomes a quietly desperate man of 30, massaging his balding scalp with a worthless patent medicine. Along the way, Rogers draws scenes of occasional hilarity and enormous depravity, set against an ever-varied backdrop of New York City street life.

In many ways *Saul's Book* comes close to other autobiographical classics that portray coming-of-age in the inner-city streets: *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Claude Brown's *Manchild in the Promised Land*, Piri Thomas' *Down These Mean Streets*.

What sets it apart is its homosexual orientation. One cannot use the word "gay" in this context; none of the principal characters has anything approaching a gay identity, even though all seek sexual pleasure almost exclusively with members of their own sex. The events at Stonewall are as alien to them as liberation theology would have been to a medieval monk.

Rogers details the ravages experienced by Sinbad as he fights for survival in an uncaring city and the often-contemptible way in which Saul treats his younger partner. For every instance of Saul's good-humoredly putting one over on the criminal justice system — posing variously as Sinbad's employer or psychiatrist — to free his younger lover from his latest legal trouble, Rogers recounts callous treatment at the hands of the older man.

In addition, Sinbad suffers brutal depredations from the city's other chicken hawks. There are scenes of degradation so enormous that they leave the reader drained of feeling. Rogers' dry, third-person description in these passages makes them almost lyrical, in a way. The technique demonstrates well his mastery of the language.

Most of the book, however, is written in Sinbad's voice, and it depicts his life with deft irony. Witness the youth at 16, waking up to a new day:

The announcer says it's twelve past six in the morning... I got a bitch of a headache and I stop smiling, fast. I look around. Well, it's a hotel room, that's for sure, but I have no idea which hotel. They all look the same to me, the ones I crash in. The walls are always painted shit green and there's plaster all over the floor and a chair which if you sat in you'd fall flat on your ass.



Wayne Winfield

A fat guy is in bed with me. Except that he is wearing polka-dot drawers, he is buck naked. He looks like a fucking beached whale or something, snoring and snorting on his back.

My head hurts so bad I wonder if I got another migraine coming on. Every fucking nerve in my body says lay there, don't get up or you'll be sorry, but I got too much to take care of today...

The whale is still snorting. He's a real beauty, the whale. Got this thick curly hair all over his chest and stomach and legs. Well, at least he's white. As Saul would say, "Thank God for small favors." When did I meet the whale? His little cock is hanging out of the slit in his drawers. He's a real beauty, the whale is.

At first, the bleakness of Sinbad's situation seems to buttress the arguments of the anti-man/boy love advocates, many of whom believe boy-lovers prey upon already vulnerable youth. But Rogers' book is no anti-pederastic polemic. Its power lies in the fact that it is as ambiguous as life itself.

Both Sinbad and Saul are complex individuals, each of whom acts, in a moral sense, both rightly and wrongly. Both have traits (e.g., Sinbad's enduring erotic fascination for the older man) which are condemned by our society but are presented here as valid ends in themselves.

Rogers does us a service by forcing us to examine the moral ramifications of Sinbad and Saul's relationship, to make us come to grips with their actions, to try to sort out what's right and what's wrong. In so doing he helps us to better understand the nature of man/boy love and the nature of the power each participant has over the other.

The questions raised by Rogers' work are not easily answered. In a story in the New York newspaper the *Voice* about Rogers' death, his son Chris asserts that Rogers asked for it: " 'He pushed me so long and so much, that I finally had to do it. He had it coming for a very long time,' said the boy..."²

The article, by *Voice* editor Guy Trebay, is a fascinating glimpse into a life that closely paralleled the character Saul's. From interviews with Rogers' friends and associates, Trebay recounts the author's overbearing nature and his low threshold for rage, as well as his numerous scrapes with the law — crimes from fraud to drug running, including assaults upon the elderly. From

the first, Rogers was involved with the boys, even paying for the bar mitzvah of a 13-year-old with whom he had a year-long affair while he was teaching at a Brooklyn yeshiva.

It is imperative for boy-lovers, and for all of us interested in human sexuality, to examine the issues raised by Rogers' life. Chief among them is the nature of Saul's domination of Sinbad and Rogers' real-life domination of Chris. Bad enough is the usual adult manipulation of children. What's worse is then the one being manipulated is emotionally dependent on the one doing the manipulating, and when this manipulation is not "in the best interests of the child," to borrow a phrase from the social work establishment. Such abuse of adult authority may occur as often between men and boys as it does between parents and children.

In a world where children are forced to barter their bodies for food and shelter, how can those who propose eliminating age-of-consent laws assure there will be no further exploitation? They can't, of course, but at least they can familiarize themselves with the issues surrounding the exploitation of children in order to meet the arguments of those who deny children sexual autonomy.

In addition, men and youths who advocate the right to have sex together can work for young people's empowerment. Having power oneself is the only certain way to prevent others from abusing theirs.

To their credit, many of the groups that have called for the right of children and adults to engage in sexually expressed relationships have also advocated children's rights and/or liberation. Chief among them are: Britain's Gay Youth Movement, the North American Man/Boy Love Association, the British collective that publishes *minor PROBLEMS*, West Germany's Indianerkommune, and the Pedophile Work Group of the Netherlands Society for Sexual Reform.

Spokespersons from groups such as these had better be familiar with the issues raised by works like *Saul's Book* if they expect to make any headway against the overwhelming opposition in Western society to children and adults having sex.

¹"Writer Beaten to Death; His Adopted Son Is Held," The New York Times, September 25, 1984; "In Brief," P.A.N. magazine, Amsterdam, issue 20, October, 1984, p.8.

²"A Novelist is Murdered by His 'Son': Dead Man's Bluff," Voice, New York, January 29, 1985, p.1.

An Urban Anger: Jews, Blacks, and a Young Butchette

Continued from Book Review page 1

generation before mine. These forces have sent many community institutions to the more affluent (and less accessible) suburbs, and have dispersed many of those working-class and poor Jews who have remained in urban, less wealthy areas, leaving us with little connectedness and low visibility.

Seid's rendering of racism-with-a-Yiddish-accent, of the often venomous form anti-Black racism has taken among some U.S. Jews, made me squirm, though I couldn't help but recognize its familiar face.

But the book also illustrates countervailing tendencies among some Jews toward fighting for justice and siding with the oppressed. These latter are historically rooted, often institutionalized tendencies, though in this novel they manifest only as responses by

individuals and not as organized political forces. The overt, unconscious racism of most of Seid's Jewish characters could have been complemented by examples of the more submerged and guilt-soaked brand I grew up with as the daughter of a Jewish Communist. Perhaps because the *The Changelings* takes place during the McCarthy era, the leftists who would surely be present in any urban working-class Jewish community didn't make an appearance in the book. Inclusion of some activists consciously resisting racism on a political level, even as they might be perpetuating it in more "personal" ways, would have added a dimension of the U.S. Jewish experience of particular interest and relevance to present-day progressives.

Though Seid does not excuse bigotry, she is

witness in this novel to the real terror and rage that were the breeding ground for the virulent racism of some of her characters. Still reeling from the impact of recent genocide in Europe, prey to economic forces beyond their control, the displacement and distortion of emotion take on pathetic and somewhat ludicrous, albeit destructive, form: "If [the Black Ones] get together — five hundred, a thousand — and march in here?" exclaims Mr. Levine at one point. "Remember what happened in Poland, in Vienna, in Berlin!" Without excusing or forgiving racism in all its brutal stupidity, Seid maintains the capacity to recognize and honor the underlying humanity of its perpetrators, their pain and their ability to change, and to hold out hope for better days.

Japanese-Canadian WWII Relocation: A Maiden Aunt's View

Obasan

Joy Kogawa

David R. Godine, Publisher, Boston, 1982

\$8.95, 250 pp.

Reviewed by Connie Chan

Megumi Naomi Nakane is a "Sansei" (third generation), the grandchild of immigrant parents who came from Japan to find a home and a new life in Canada. Fishing people from generations past in Japan, they made their home on the coast in Vancouver, British Columbia. Many years later, when Naomi's grandparents and uncle die, they are buried not on the coast or in the sea, but in the plains and prairies of wind-swept Alberta. The story of how they and other Canadians of Japanese ancestry were forced from their homes, imprisoned, and forced to "relocate" during World War II is the story of *Obasan*.

Obasan is an enchanting first novel by Joy Kogawa, a "Nisei" (second generation) writer. It movingly chronicles one Japanese-Canadian family's forced relocation from Vancouver to the internment camps and ghost towns — the godforsaken, undesirable places no one else wanted. It also tells of the times and of the country that would not allow them back to their homes and possessions and finally, would not allow them to return to the seacoast areas where their communities once stood. Their crime? Being Canadian citizens of Japanese ancestry, their children Canadian born and bred. They were people of Japanese ancestry during World War II, and they no longer had any rights, in the United States, or in Canada.

Obasan is a very personal story. It is Naomi's story, and it is eloquently told in images and rich detail. It is told in a manner that moves the reader across time, from Naomi as a grown-up adult school teacher in Alberta —

Marital status: Old Maid...Spinster? Old maid? Bachelor lady? The terms certainly apply. At thirty-six, I'm no bargain in the marriage market. But Aunt Emily in Toronto, still single at fifty-six, is even more old-maidish than I am and yet she refuses the label. She says if we laundered the term properly, she'd put it on, but it's too covered with cultural accretions for comfort. [p. 8]



Joy Kogawa

— to Naomi's bewilderment as a young child, hearing only snatches of low conversations after bedtime, sensing the fear and the panic among her parents and other adults. With her, the reader endures the moves that seem to make no sense, leaving home in Vancouver to ghost towns, hearing about relatives in prison for no apparent reason, not understanding the extent of the racism and paranoia, the hate and scapegoating directed at innocent children and adults.

It is a story told by different voices. One strong voice is Naomi's Aunt Emily, through her letters to Naomi's mother in Japan. Ever questioning, she seeks an answer to the reason for the racism and the injustices. Years later, in 1972, she feels more betrayed than bitter. At 56 years old, her life is more than half over, yet she still searches for the truth, unable to forget or forgive those who separated her family and destroyed her way of life.

As readers, we experience Aunt Emily's anger and anguish first hand from her letters and then again from Naomi's perspective as she reads them. Naomi's story unfolds slowly; instead of a narrative, she gives the reader scenes and dreams from her childhood, along with detail-laden descriptions of the present. The images are so strongly presented that I could close my eyes and visualize the rooms; the actions so deliberate at times I felt I was reading a haiku poem. Kogawa is particularly successful in her development of the action; she gets the reader to move at Naomi's cautious yet impatient pace, and we become both scared and fascinated with a secret that has been kept from Naomi for forty years. In the end, like Naomi, we are not disappointed.

Obasan is well-written and well-paced, with strong female characters. Unfortunately, we do not get to know any of the male characters as well — they seem to be more flat and lack substance. This is only a minor flaw, for this is a novel that tells far more than just the story of one Japanese-Canadian family; it is a story of gross injustice, of losing one's rights in a democracy; it is a story of a people who were betrayed and never understood why. *Obasan* is Naomi's story, but it is also a story for any and all of us who have been treated unjustly, or pre-judged by our race and/or sexuality. In *Obasan*, we recognize the pain of being singled out because we were different; we can also share in the hurt, and in the small triumphs of maintaining our identities and our pride.

Where do any of us come from in this cold country?

Oh Canada, whether it is admitted or not, we come from you we come from you. From the same soil, the slugs and slime and bogs and twigs and roots. We come from the country that plucks its people out like weeds and flings them into the roadside. We grow in ditches and sloughs, untended and spindly. We erupt in the valleys and mountainsides, in small towns and back alleys, sprouting upside-down on the prairies, our hair wild as spiders' legs, our feet rooted nowhere. We grow where we are not seen, we flourish where we are not heard, the thick undergrowth of an unlikely planting. Where do we come from Obasan? We come from cemeteries full of skeletons with wild roses in their grinning teeth. We come from our untold tales that wait for their telling. We come from Canada, this land that is like every land, filled with the wise, the fearful the compassionate, the corrupt.

Uneven Men's Comedy from Promising Writer

Extra Credit

Jeff Black

Alyson Publications, Boston, 1985

\$5.95, 177 pp.

Reviewed by Bill Kreidler

Extra Credit is the story of Harper King, a former college gymnast (doesn't it seem like there are a lot of gay novels about former college gymnasts?) who is pinned to the mat by ennui. Bored with his job teaching English in a tough junior high school, lacking both love and real friendship, he tries in a despondent way to sort out his life. The task is complicated by the people with whom he must cope, including Rose, the martinet chair of the English Department; Connie, a frustrated, mercurial, and ultimately vindictive colleague (women do not come off well in this book); Garrick, a vague and insecure new teacher; and Mick, an old lover. Life is something that happens to Harper King, and *Extra Credit* chronicles his successful attempt to gain some control over it, to become an actor instead of merely a reactor.

For most of the book, however, Harper King is the passive victim of circumstance. Only through his cynical wit does he fight back, and pretty ineffectual fighting it is, too. This is something of a problem, not only for King but also for the reader.

The cover of *Extra Credit* hails it as "the funniest gay novel of the year." I can agree with that only if I am allowed to name the year. *Extra Credit* is frequently amusing; it often made me smile, but it never made me laugh. Part of the problem is that King's pathetic situation and passive outlook overwhelm the humor. Certainly such dreary circumstances could be made very funny, but I'm afraid this requires a defter touch than Jeff Black's. The book's humor usually sinks under the weight of King's despair. What should be a depressing



The funniest gay novel of the year

by Jeff Black

undertone becomes a depressing overtone, and that is bad news for a comic novel.

Another problem with *Extra Credit* is that Black

doesn't always allow the humor to arise naturally from his characters' insights. The times that he does provide the book with its best moments. King's experience in a gay bar, for example, is both funny and perceptive, as is his soliloquy on his feelings about love:

How many times had my feelings about love changed?

The figure was starting to mount. Once it had been a religion: I was awestruck and averted my eyes. Then it was a game: Milton Bradley blew a bundle when he didn't invent this one. Love then seemed a second job with an occasional fringe benefit. Now it had evolved into a combination of all three with a dash of more ambiguous feelings thrown in for spice — and a little quiet patch where there were no feelings for love at all, just a bit of numbness, not really unpleasant once you got used to it.

In contrast with these moments, however, are the jokes that Black insists on dropping into the narrative, even when it means pummeling the characters and plot to make room for them.

Only in the last three chapters does *Extra Credit* come close to saving itself. The plot suddenly becomes wilder and looser. During a confrontation with Rose, King quits his job and impetuously flees to Chicago looking for Mick, only to find him with another man. He returns home where he is seduced by one of his students, and is, for reasons I won't go into, locked into the school overnight with Garrick. All of this culminates in King's taking decisive action to change and improve his life: All in just three chapters! Black controls these new and zany developments well, making them credible and never allowing them to degenerate into an *I-Love-Lucy* type of farce.

Jeff Black writes well and perceptively. The last chapters of *Extra Credit* indicate that when it misses the mark, as it so frequently does, it isn't because he hasn't tried. It's because he has tried too hard.

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Fellow Travellers

T.C. Worsley
Gay Men's Press, London
\$7.50 paper, 249 pp.

T.C. Worsley's autobiographical *Fellow Travellers* is a novel of British intellectuals — many of them homosexuals — and their efforts to aid Spain in the Civil War. First published in 1971, it was actually written during the period it describes. It is imperative to keep this in mind because the book is much more than a mere historical *roman à clef* examining the past lives, loves and politics of 1930s gay male radicals. Written as



a collection of letters and diaries, authors' notes and characters' commentaries, it resembles what has been called the non-fictional novel. It convinces us, with all of the power of an imagined fiction, but also has the hard slap of truth and history.

The story, for there is very little plot in the traditional sense, centers around Martin Murry, based very closely upon poet and critic Stephen Spender, and his working-class lover Harry Watson. Murry is a beacon of inspiration for his leftist friends, but it is Harry, fired by his lover's articulated politics, who actually leaves London and joins the International Brigade to fight in Spain. This action forces Murry, and many of his upper-class radical friends, to deal with the realities of their intellectualized and only semi-acted-upon politics.

But beyond its story, and the new insight it offers about real historical figures, *Fellow Travellers* is a pungent and sometimes frightening examination of the complexities of love, friendship and politics. Although there is no doubt of the author's (and his characters') dedication to anti-fascism, Worsley has dissected both his time and setting so carefully as to expose the most intricately hidden emotion, the most expertly concealed motivation. He examines that particular point where the personal meets the political and has found not only truth, but also fear, hypocrisy and the self-serving.

But aside from being a great read, *Fellow Travellers* is a document of gay history. Homosexual radicalism is a fact that is both unacknowledged by many gay people and generally hidden by many leftists. This novel not only presents us with the indisputable facts of the situation in 1930s England and Spain; it presents them in a way which makes the connection between them not only reasonable, but inevitable.

— Michael Bronski

The Lavender Couch

Dr. Marny Hall
Boston: Alyson, 1985
\$7.95 paper, 199 pp.

Classified Affairs

John Preston and Frederick Brandt
Boston: Alyson, 1984
\$6.95 paper, 116 pp.

A long time ago when I was first a college student, I went to see a psychiatrist who taught at my university's medical school. At the time I was struggling to free myself from the clutches of my overprotective family, beginning on a personal transformation that eventually was to lead to my coming out. But my doctor "friend" was no help: He was one of

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the coldest persons I have ever met; if I learned anything from my sessions with him, it was that I should look for counseling from someone with a spark of human compassion.

I had not quite recognized my sexual feelings for what they were. It was just as well, given the circumstances. Years later I learned that he was involved in a debate with a local gay group, defending the traditional psychiatric view of homosexuality as a personality disorder.

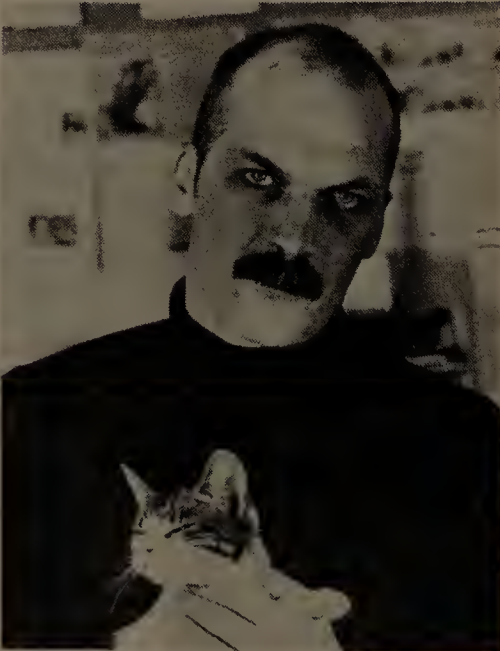
Yet at the time I only knew I deserved better than this reptile. I was fortunate that the psychiatrists I would deal with as I was defining my sexual identity were infinitely superior. They were supportive, even if at times they may have disagreed with some of my choices. Only later when I heard some of the psychiatric horror stories, including that of a friend who had been subjected to repeated electroshock therapy intended to "cure" him of his homosexuality (and nearly had his brains burned out in the process), did I realize just how lucky I had been.

Since then I have implicitly recognized the basic importance of gay-affirmative therapy whenever I have needed outside help, therapy that respects my personhood and does not insult me with the arrogant assumption that my homosexuality is the "problem." Such is the premise behind *The Lavender Couch*, a "consumer's guide" for gay men and lesbians who are considering therapy. Marny Hall is a lesbian psychiatrist in private practice in San Francisco.

The book is arranged in a logical progression: how to begin searching for a therapist, matching up with one who meets your needs, negotiating a contract and fees, dealing with any problems that may arise in the course of therapy, recognizing when and how to end therapy. Adding to its utility are a sample client-therapist contract and a list of resources. This is a most useful and badly-needed handbook for the person who is embarking on this perilous quest.

* * *

Classified Affairs is another kind of guide, for gay men interested in the personal ads. For many people, placing or answering such advertisements has the air of the exotic — it's still slightly taboo. For me the results have been, frankly, prosaic: I've occasionally answered ads, and some of the responses have resulted in sex or friendship, though (alas!) never romance. They are a comparatively new



John Preston

way of making contact, developing in underground newspapers of the 1960s like the famous Los Angeles *Free Press*, and coming of age with the rise of gay journalism in the last decade and a half.

John Preston and Frederick Brandt have written a short work that examines and demystifies what has by now become almost a venerable institution in our community. The stereotype that only "losers" place or respond to ads is far from the truth. Instead, they describe a varied clientele, including: people who live in isolated areas, men who dislike bars, those who are coming out or who must be discreet, people concerned about disease and avoiding anonymous contacts, and prisoners.

The authors give many helpful suggestions for writing and answering the personals, including definitions to many of those mysterious codes and abbreviations. Laudibly emphasized throughout is the importance of a sense of humor in this undertaking. Also useful is the inclusion of a coupon good for a free classified in any one of 25 gay periodicals.

— John Kyper

BOOK

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS

SHORTS

Other Halves

Sue McCauley
Penguin Books, 1985
\$5.95, 254 pp.

A thirty-five-year-old, white, middle-class housewife, Liz, meets Tug, a sixteen-year-old unemployed Maori boy, in a psychiatric hospital. Liz is a voluntary patient escaping marriage, motherhood, and desperate boredom. Tug has been hospitalized after pleading drug addiction in an attempt to escape a prison sentence for stealing. *Other Halves*, New Zealand writer Sue McCauley's first novel, is the tale of this unlikely couple's love relationship.

Through her association with Tug, Liz begins to comprehend the experience of race, class, and age prejudice in a way that she failed to grasp within the sexually oppressive confines of her marriage. With Liz' support, Tug begins to have hope of leaving his marginal life on the streets.

The couple's attempt to build a life together is continually thwarted by the disapproval of friends and community and by the racism that prevents Tug from finding work. These factors, combined with the enormous emotional differences between them, gradually bring the relationship to its breaking point. They are rescued by an invitation from a gay male friend to join a community in the North Island. "Different's normal there," Martyn, the gay man, says. And for Liz and Tug the community is different enough for them to pull together.

Martyn and his lover Pete live a quiet, domestic life amidst straight hippie couples, but — disappointingly for the gay or lesbian reader — the two men have no connection to gay culture outside of each other. In this respect, *Other Halves* is a straight novel. However, the ease with which the gay characters are introduced, and the protagonist's almost innocent acceptance of the vast differences inherent in her relationship with Tug, allow us to believe in the workability of non-traditional coupling.

Particularly striking is McCauley's treatment of the intergenerational theme. Her unself-conscious portrayal of a woman/youth relationship exposes both difficult and joyous aspects. The protagonists are both, at times, embarrassed by their association with each

BOOK

GAY COMMUNITY NEWS

SHORTS

other. They fight about responsibility and freedom, but they also delight in their difference. Liz' guidance allows Tug to take risks finding work and to build a more independent lifestyle. Tug draws Liz into spontaneous play that she had long ago forgotten, and we are treated to a couple of delightful sexual scenes in which he initiates play with gender roles.

Other Halves is a very satisfying novel. We are given a glimpse of life in New Zealand in the mid-seventies, a couple of gay characters presented in a sympathetic light, and a well-written, realistic portrayal of an intergenerational, interracial relationship.

— Carolyn Stack

The Two of Us: Affirming, Celebrating and Symbolizing Gay and Lesbian Relationships

Larry J. Uhrig
Alyson Publications
\$6.95 paper, 140 pp.

The first thing that one notices about this book is that the cover features something which looks like a melted Gumby doll with a cock ring tossed on it. Actually it's a lambda and a wedding ring.

Books like *The Two of Us* elicit very specific responses. One group of people will hate it for its touchy-feely, I'm o-gay/You're o-gay approach to relationships and perhaps especially for its stance on "blessing" a gay relationship. Although the author makes distinctions between gay relationships and straight "marriages," what may seem to some as respecting our lives seems to others as restricting and living in imitation of straight norms.

On the other hand, if you are interested in celebrating and institutionalizing gay relationships, this book may be for you. Aside from the usual advice on the do's and don't's of relationships, the book contains formal "contracts of commitments," and formats for an "Order of Worship" complete with suggested processional hymns and benedictions.

As I said, you'll either love it or hate it.

— Michael Bronski



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Us in the Eyes of Them

Titles of Interest from the Mainstream Press

Women in Academe

While mainstream trade publishers occupy their time publishing books that tell women how to maximize their middle-management potential, the university presses have been busy with explorations of women's history and scholarship. If at times a little too academic, they are nevertheless of interest and importance.

Emily Herring Wilson's *Hope and Dignity: Older Black Women in the South* (Temple U. Press, \$19.95) is a series of narratives and dialogues with Black women in their seventies, eighties, and nineties about their lives and histories. A fine blend of scholarship and oral history. In a similar vein is Bessie Jones's *For the Ancestors*, collected and edited by John Stewart (U. of Illinois Press, \$14.95), a self-portrait of a rural Black woman's life and career as a domestic, farm worker, and self-appointed collector and historian of Black musical traditions. Jacqueline Jones's *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow* (Basic Books, \$22.95) is a solid, if somewhat analytical, look at Black women and their relationships to the family and to work, from slavery to the present.

Martha Vicinus' *Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women 1850-1920* (U. of Chicago, \$27.50) deals with white, middle-class women in relationship to one another, especially in work. While lesbianism does not play a huge part in the book's analysis, there is plenty here to satisfy. Also concerned with work is Flora Tristan's *The Worker's Union* (U. of Illinois, \$14.95). First published in 1843, Tristan argues (long before most anyone else) for a worker's consciousness of class as an imperative for organizing, with a special emphasis on women.

Another analysis of women workers, Leah Lydia Otis' *Prostitution in Medieval Society* (U. of Chicago, \$22.50), is a fascinating, if very detailed, look at women, sexism, and economics. Likewise, Christine Klapish-Zuber's *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy* (U. of Chicago, \$27.50) is a painstakingly researched work which looks at the origins of much of our contemporary culture. Wider in scope is Penny Schine Gold's *The Lady and the Virgin* (U. of Chicago, \$20.00) which examines the popular culture which reinforced dichotomies in the images of and attitudes towards women in twelfth-century France. Although specific in time and place, the book makes clear connections to the present.

Impact of the past on the present is also clear in Charles Bernheimer's collection of pieces *In Dora's Case: Freud—Hysteria—Feminism* (Columbia U. Press, \$22.00), a close look at both Freudian theory and its application to therapy and society over the years. An ultimately superficial look at psychological theory in relation to children is Uwe Peters' *Anna Freud*. Mostly a compendium of papers and dates, the book does include material and photos on her lifetime companion, Dorothy Burlingham.

Equally connected to fame — and hating it — is Angelica Garnett, Virginia Woolf's niece, who tells of the hell of growing up bohemian in *Deceived with Kindness* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, \$14.95). It's not quite "Bloomsbury Dearest," but almost.

Respectful, and well-written, is Nancy Reich's *Clara Schumann: The Artist and the Woman* (Cornell U., \$25.00). Nothing shocking, but of value to those interested in the history of women and music.

Queens of Stage

The genre of the film-star bio/autobio can be informative and fun; these aren't. *Three Phases of Eve* (St. Martin's, \$17.95) by Eve Arden is pulpy and sentimental, nothing like her film persona. Glenys Robert's *Bardot* (St. Martin's, \$14.95) could have dwelt more on the horrors of being a sex goddess in pop-culture. It doesn't and is silly and trivializing. Michael Feeney Callan's *Julie Christie* (St. Martin's, \$14.95) has the advantage of being about an intelligent, articulate woman. Still, it's silly too and, even worse, written with pretention; nice photos. Raymond Strait/Leif Henie's *Queen of Ice, Queen of Shadows* (Stein and Day, \$19.95) tries to be "Sonia Dearest," but ends up as shallow as skate blades on ice. The best of the lot is Robert Laguardia's *Red: The Tempestuous Life of Susan Hayward* (Macmillan, \$16.95). His earlier bio of Montgomery Clift was better, but this is a good examination of what it was like to be a woman, a star, and a worker in a culture which used and ultimately denigrated all three.

Dick Moore's *Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star* (but don't have sex or take the car) (Harper and Row, \$16.95) is a memoir of growing up a young star in Hollywood, and while entertaining, exposes the exploitation of children, not only in the industry but in American life. Not much more than a footnote to the pathologically sexist career and life of Alfred

Hitchcock is David Freeman's *The Last Days of Alfred Hitchcock* (Overlook, \$17.95). It features the unfiled script of his last movie, but all in all, is only of interest when read in conjunction with Donald Spoto's detailed biography.

Both Carey Schofield's *Jagger* (Beaufort, \$8.95) and Chet Flippo's *On the Road with the Rolling Stones: Twenty Years of Lipstick, Handcuffs and Chemicals* (Doubleday, \$6.95) are glib, gonzo journalism about the world's favorite musical sex purveyors. Both avoid much mention of the homosexuality which has always been attendant to the group.

Fables of Passion

Ann Beattie's newest, *Love Always* (Random House, \$16.95), is sort of the indiscreet charmlessness of the bourgeoisie — with several well-drawn characters. And indiscreet though charming is the last installment in Ann Rice's "Beauty Trilogy." Written under the pseudonym of A.N. Roquelaure, *Beauty's Release* (Dutton, \$8.95) is equally divided between homo-(male) and hetero-sex. Ornately written, this is about the hottest book of the summer. Less good, but interesting, is Ann Rice's (under the pseudonym Ann Rampling) *Exit to Eden* (Arbor House, \$17.95): sort of an S/M Club Med, not that hot, but some good thoughts about sex, S/M, and power.

From one utopia to another we have *Daring to Dream* (Pandora, \$9.95), a collection of women's utopian stories from the late 1800s. A great mix of speculative, science, psychological, and social fictions. Jim Heynan's *You Know What is Right* (North Point, \$13.95) consists of short sketches of rural American life. Precise and to the point, they deal with growing up and sex. Equally as specific to locale is Faye Moskowitz's *A Leak in the Heart* (David Godine, \$13.95), autobiographical story/essays about growing up Jewish Orthodox in 1930s Michigan. What it lacks in elegance, it more than makes up in feeling and thought. And combining feeling, depth, elegance, and genius is Grace Paley's newest collection, *Later the Same Day* (Farrar, Straus, Giroux \$13.95). If you know her other work, this is a must; if you don't, read it all.

William Goyen's *Had I a Hundred Mouths* (Clarkson Potter, \$15.95) is a final collection of the late author's stories. Mysterious, sometimes violent, they have a perverse, brooding sexual undertone reminiscent of Flannery O'Connor. Ntozake Shange's *Betsey Brown* (St. Martin's, \$12.95) is the author's first full-length novel. Lyrical and funny, it details growing up Black, female, and confused in the 1950s. From the other end of the age spectrum is Julius Lester's *Do Lord Remember Me*

(Holt, Rinehart, \$13.95), the last-day remembrances of a Black minister from slavery to the early civil rights movement.

Cecile Pineda's *Face* (Viking, \$14.95) is a strange fable of a Brazilian man who loses his face in an accident, and of his painstaking physical reconstruction and rediscovery of a sexual, national, and personal sense of self. Just as disturbing is Iain Banks' *The Wasp Factory* (Houghton Mifflin, \$13.95), concerning a distrubed English boy who lives in a fantasy world of paranoia and twisted sexual sensibilities. Ultimately, it's about identity, but with a shocker of an ending. Francis King's *Voices in an Empty Room* (Little, Brown, \$15.95) is about loss and dependency and how the two may bring about a catharsis. Also look for two earlier works — *The Domestic Animal* and *The Firewalkers* — both just reissued by Gay Men's Press.

Eric Higgs' *The Happy Man* (St. Martin's Press, \$11.95) pretends to look at sexuality and violence in modern society. It doesn't, and it's exploitative and stupid. Thomas Berger's *Nowhere* (Delacourt, \$14.95) is homophobic, misogynist and repulsive. The question is not why it got published, but why Berger's literary reputation keeps getting better and better. Edward Stewart's *Ariana* (Crown, \$17.95) is a *roman à clef* of Maria Callas. It's at least fun in a trashy sort of way, if a little too long.

Words of Fame

Gertrude Stein is seeing a minor revival this summer with *Picasso: The Complete Writings* (Beacon, \$7.95) and *Lectures in America* (Beacon, \$10.95), both back in print after years and well worth checking out. As is Virgil Thompson's *Autobiography* (Dutton, \$11.95): not as revealing or gossipy as it might be, but cranky, fun reading. Kay Boyle's *Words That Must Somehow Be Said 1927-1984* is a good selection of a woman's journey through progressive politics and the good fight for almost sixty years. In a similar vein, although more literary, is Mary McCarthy's *Occasional Prose* (Harcourt, \$17.95). Peppered with politics and insights on sex, culture, and writing, this is McCarthy at her pungent, quick-witted best. Stevie Smith: *A Selection* (Faber and Faber, \$6.95) is a concise sampling of her poetry and prose. Mordantly feminist and scathing, it's unlike anything else: quite odd and wonderful. *A Learical Lexicon* (Atheneum, \$12.95) is a fanciful collection of words invented by the great, gay limerist and word diddler, Edward Lear. Neatly put together, there is more gay imagination here than in any batch of current gay novels or magazines.

— Michael Bronski

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CIA-Baiting a Liberal Closet Queen

The Pied Piper: Allard K. Lowenstein and the Liberal Dream

Richard Cummings
Grove Press, New York, 1985
\$19.95, 569 pp.

Reviewed by Gordon Gottlieb

After liberal activist Allard Lowenstein was elected to Congress in 1968, so the story goes, his conservative colleagues-to-be anticipated his arrival on the congressional scene with dread. But he turned out not to be the wild-eyed, bomb-throwing Jewish radical they feared. He even won the respect of South Carolina Rep. Mendel Rivers — then the chair of the House Armed Services Committee — who proudly informed him, “We don’t have just one, but two (pronounced “tee-yew”), two synagogues in Charleston.” Later into his term, Rivers took Lowenstein aside and said, “Lowenstein, my boy, you and I may not see eye to eye on lots of things. But I like you, and when you run for re-election, I will campaign for you, or against you, whichever you want!”

That Lowenstein, who was viewed as the driving force behind the 1968 Dump Johnson movement, could make a friend and occasional ally of Congress’ number one booster of the military-industrial complex is just one part of the legend that surrounds a remarkable man. (There is, of course, the underlying question of even a temporary alliance with a personable reactionary, but most good liberals would opt, I think, for pragmatism over principle.) And in liberal circles, Lowenstein is still viewed with awe and admiration for his leadership from the 1950s through the 1970s.

In some ways, he represents the quintessential (and in his case seemingly ubiquitous) liberal — as a student, he played a leadership role in the National Student Association (NSA); in the 1960s, he was active in the church-led wing of the civil rights movement in the South and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa; and he worked on human rights issues at the U.N. under Andrew Young in the late 1970s. Like all good liberals, he was an optimist. He had faith: Give people the right tools, access to the system, and their problems would be addressed and — ultimately — solved. He conveyed this faith with almost messianic fervor, aiming his words at the young, particularly college students, keeping them in the fold of libetalism — or at least within the electoral system.

Richard Cummings has written a comprehensive and controversial biography of Lowenstein. Not only does it chronicle in impressive detail Lowenstein’s life

and death (he was assassinated by a crazed ex-protege in 1980), but *The Pied Piper* treats Lowenstein as a metaphor for American post-war liberalism and subjects a once highly regarded political movement to the same scrutiny Lowenstein himself faces. Not too surprisingly, both come out wanting, though their boosters claim otherwise.

The most provocative (and frequently challenged) aspect of the book is Cummings’ contention that Lowenstein was a CIA operative in Spain and South Africa, informed on Communists in the civil rights movement, and helped the CIA manipulate the National Student Association in the 1950s. Motivated by the staunch anti-communism of leading post-war liberals like Norman Thomas, Eleanor Roosevelt and Duke University President Frank Graham, Lowenstein actively sought out non-communist alternatives to the pressing foreign policy problems of that era. It is difficult to remember that — even as it finalizes plans to invade Nicaragua — the CIA was once viewed as the last refuge of Cold War liberals in foreign policy decision-making circles. Cummings identifies what is called the “good wing” of the CIA, which sought to shore up the anti-Communist left in countries where

Russian influence was feared, channeling millions into various domestic and foreign front groups, which could in turn fund seemingly independent, autonomous political parties and movements. Lowenstein was a likely conduit, says Cummings, by virtue of his impressive contacts within the socialist, anti-Franco movement in Spain, among white liberals in South Africa, and the more moderate of the Black African liberation groups in what was then South West Africa.

Ah, but was he really an actual agent or just an independent soul whose interests and activities coincided with the CIA’s? It’s one thing to have overlapping interests, it’s quite something else to take home a little paycheck every week. A number of leading liberals have indignantly rejected any Lowenstein-CIA connection, using various forums to denounce the book. Even before the book’s publication, the *Washington Post* printed a spirited (and fairly bitchy, even for the *Post*) defense of Lowenstein, taking Cummings equally to task for drawing conclusions where no proof could be presented, for conducting sloppy research, and for changing his name from Cohen to Cummings. And indeed, Cummings does rely on unnamed sources, inference, and occasional cryptic notations by Lowenstein to make good his charge. Yet the liberals’ fury is somewhat counterbalanced by the longevity of speculation about Lowenstein. As early as the mid-1960s, the SDS and other New Left types openly called Lowenstein a CIA plant, and many other liberals during the 1950s and early 1960s did have connections with the “good wing” of the CIA. Since what was once seen as the left’s paranoia about government infiltration and manipulation has been in part subsequently verified, so claims of agents among us should not be so routinely discounted.

And no one seems to ask: How *does* one prove that a dead man was a CIA operative? Regretably, there are no paycheck stubs lying around. Cummings actually spends several pages describing the difficulty in determining how an individual can be formally and informally associated with the CIA. Certainly, the Agency won’t say. Friends are quoted as having suspicions, but nothing more is offered.

Interestingly, all this spook speculation has drawn attention away from another controversial part of Lowenstein’s life that *is* more effectively verified — that Lowenstein was gay. Lowenstein was always lauded for his emphasis on incorporating young people into the electoral process and used college students as a major power base for his organizing efforts. This important political goal apparently coincided with his attraction to the many WASPy young men his crusade attracted. He

Continued on Book Review page 8



Allard Lowenstein, 1972

Associated Press/NY Times

Short Political Fiction Well Worth Reading

The Things That Divide Us

Edited by Faith Conlon, Racehl da Silva and Barbara Wilson
The Seal Press, Seattle, 1985
\$7.95, 191 pp.

Reviewed by Pat M. Kuras

The Things That Divide Us is a collection of fifteen short stories by women. The stories explore various barriers which women have for keeping themselves separate from one another. The women are separated by varying degrees of intolerance, ignorance, jealousy, hate and social pressures. The factors causing these enforced barriers are racial, ethnic and financial differences, heterosexism versus lesbianism, and alcoholism juxtaposing sobriety.

As with any anthology, some of the contents surpass other work in the book. I tend to read stories solely for enjoyment. With feminist fiction, literary conventions seem to be tossed aside in order to project rhetoric and preaching. In a recent interview, Edmund White said, “In the mid-’70s there was a kind of enthusiasm for publishing lots of gay titles, but a lot of junk was brought out that didn’t do very well, so now the number of gay books has fallen off for commercial reasons.” I think this remark of White’s would be just as accurate if you substituted the word feminist for gay, or possibly even, say, political fiction. The trouble with delivering messages, whether it be in fiction, poetry or song, is that the composer usually finds the message more important than the medium and, as a result, the work suffers.

A couple of the stories in *The Things That Divide Us* are real clunkers, but, for the most part, it’s a

surprisingly good book. Surprising, I say, because it is so seldom that I find heavy, theme-laden work making good fiction. I enjoyed many of the stories, particularly two by women whom I have known primarily as poets — the Boston area’s Robin Becker and Philadelphia’s Becky Birtha.

Becker’s story, “In the Badlands,” concerns a young lesbian who returns to her hometown in South Dakota, bringing along her female lover. The story is told from the viewpoint of the hometown lesbian’s mother. Mrs. Stokes has lived in the area all her life and finds nothing exotic about the mesas of the National Park or working along side Chippewa women in the Bulova watch factory. Helen, the new arrival, is unintentionally patronizing. Mrs. Stokes is well aware of the nature of her daughter’s relationship with Helen: “‘Extinct is Forever’ read her bumper sticker and ‘Save the Ferret.’ She was trying to save the world; I just wished she’d forget about my daughter.” When her daughter pleads with her to accept Helen, Mrs. Stokes counters with: “‘Aren’t I trying? Do I laugh when she asks me what I know about Calamity Jane?’” There is no real resolution with this story; Mrs. Stokes learns that she will have to accept Helen. Becker’s writing truly captures Mrs. Stokes’ dilemma: her isolation in wanting to dislike Helen and her inability to openly discuss lesbianism. This is a story told with wit and grace. I look forward to seeing more of Becker’s fiction.

Becky Birtha is an accomplished poet and, in 1983, published an exquisite collection of short stories (*For Nights Like This One: Stories of Loving Women*, Frog In the Well Press). The contributor notes state that she is a Black, lesbian feminist and is involved in an eight-year-old interracial relationship. Her story, called “Her Ex-Lover,” is about Ernestine and Shirley, two Black lesbians, and Shirley’s on-going anger and jealousy

towards Lisa, a white lesbian and Ernestine’s former lover. As Shirley puts it: “I’m still thinking about that

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Becky Birtha

Tee Corinne

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Decades of Love and Life from Lesbians

Inland Passage and Other Stories

Jane Rule
Naiad Press, Tallahassee, 1985
 \$7.95, 273 pp.

Misfortune's Friend

Sarah Aldridge
Naiad Press, Tallahassee, 1985
 \$7.95, 296 pp.

The Swashbuckler

Lee Lynch
Naiad Press, Tallahassee, 1985
 \$7.95, 288 pp.

Reviewed by Diane Hamer

The stories of *Inland Passage* are set within the structure of young adulthood, maturity, and old age. This structure also speaks for these three books as they chronicle individual lives that grow as time passes: *Misfortune's Friend* takes place in the late 1920s and '30s, *The Swashbuckler* from 1960-'72, and *Inland Passage* the 1980s. Each presents examples of individual lesbian lives, rather than the politics of each time period. Each examines in microcosm the ways that lesbians have lived.



Sarah Aldridge

In *Misfortune's Friend*, Althea, fourteen and disabled with a limp from polio and wearing a brace on her leg, goes to live with her maiden Aunt Marjorie in Washington, D.C. Her grandmother, who had been caring for her since her mother died, can no longer provide a place for her. Marjorie is an outcast in the family but at this point, there is no one else in the family willing to take Althea in. She is a quiet, withdrawn child who leans toward pensive afternoons of staring out the window or reading books. Years go by, some in a line or

two, a technique of Aldridge's that annoyed me, especially in light of how hazy the passage of time became later on. Living in Aunt Marjorie's home, Althea meets many interesting, if not fascinating, women, most notably Mrs. Henshaw, an old boarding school friend of Marjorie's. It is she who is referred to by the title as she spends her life coming to the aid of people in need.

Eventually, Althea graduates from college with no apparent important interactions or relationships along the way. Deciding to do graduate work, she makes the big break and moves to London, where by chance, Mrs. Henshaw lives. In case Althea needs any help, Mrs. Henshaw will be available. And through Mrs. Henshaw, Althea meets more fascinating people, including Fern, "whose frankness caused Althea's shyness to recede." They begin a friendship that turns to love. Oddly enough, Althea accepts this love with no apprehension, no fright, and almost no question — no self-consciousness, no recriminations. Eventually Mrs. Henshaw realizes what has developed and she screams at Althea, "...It is most unsuitable for her [Fern] to be living with you...you imagine yourselves in love...but you must stop it! It cannot go on! It is unhealthy!" Althea responds that there isn't anything wrong with it and successfully defends her position.

All along, the relationship between Marjorie and Mrs. Henshaw has been touched on, hinted at and surmised about, but never are we given any details except description that seems to say that Marjorie is deeply in love with Mrs. Henshaw (who married early and then lost her husband). At this point Mrs. Henshaw also learns that another woman had been living with Aunt Marjorie but has since left her, and so "Misfortune's Friend" rushes to the States to be with her old friend, telling Althea, "I have taken very much to heart what you have said.... My dear, you must believe me when I say that your aunt has always meant more to me than anyone else in life." We see that Althea's calm acceptance of herself has enabled Mrs. Henshaw to admit something to herself.

Fans of Sarah Aldridge will probably find this novel satisfying, but I found it frustrating and hard to finish. There were loose ends, such as the full significance of Althea's limp and brace. We see her withdraw, but she never suffers any discrimination or abuse, and since she contracted polio during the great epidemic of 1913, I'm surprised there weren't other disabled people around. There is also anachronistic language such as able-bodied, a word rarely used until recently.

The Swashbuckler picks up this social history in 1962 with Frenchie on her way to a lesbian bar in Greenwich Village. For Frenchie, life is lived for Saturday night and whichever girl she is interested in this week. Frenchie is a butch. "...All 4'11" of her was in the tough, bouncing walk.... Yeah, she was a bulldyke and every Saturday night she loved being a bulldyke in a bulldyke's world."

This is the story of a bar dyke in the days when roles were very strong. But as time passes and different voices and perspectives speak to us, we see the roles, and choices, change. Frenchie meets a lesbian with a daughter; later she becomes lovers with a woman who wears dresses, has other lovers at the same time, doesn't identify as either butch or femme, and is openly gay with her straight friends. For Frenchie these are new and wonderful things. All her life she has kept her lesbian life completely separate from her home life. She

lives with her elderly mother and in one excellently written scene, Frenchie discards her bulldyke attire and attitude as the subway speeds toward her stop. She is so able to pass in her other world that one day when one of her bar acquaintances turns up in her checkout line at the supermarket, she tells Frenchie she looks familiar, and asks if she has a sister. Frenchie says yes, she does. Later on, as Frenchie changes, she is able to consolidate somewhat these two sides of her life. But as she says in the end, times haven't changed enough: "I'd settle for being able to get off the subway at Times Square instead of Fourteenth, [settle] for walking like a dyke, like myself.... Is that too much to ask?"

There is a frustrating but moving chapter when Frenchie goes to Provincetown with some gay male friends of hers. She is alone, insecure and out of her own familiar world. At the outset she gets her period for which she is unprepared. She is crampy, sick, and feeling ugly. This is a pivotal episode, however, because she meets a beautiful woman who, after both experience painful and troubling times, becomes her lover. The reader waits breathlessly for them to finally reach out to one another. The novel ends in a rushed last chapter, but very happily and optimistically.



Jane Rule

Inland Passage goes even further in exploring changing times: hardly any of the stories are about lesbians. Most involve heterosexual couples; in some, lesbians are the peripheral characters. However, in a series of six of these stories, some of Jane Rule's most memorable characters live. In what could be a novella, or the start of one, we meet a family of four: Anna and Harry, their daughter Sally and son Joey.

In "A Chair for George," Harry decides his family needs a grandmother; his own mother is a globe-trotting, much-married lady he hasn't seen in years. His mother-in-law died before his marriage to Anna. So when the local YWCA holds an adopt-a-grandparent tea, "Harry was determined that they would all go and come home with a grandmother of all their dreams."

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Decades of Love and Life from Lesbians

Continued from page 7

When they arrive at the tea, they are initially disappointed in the people they meet, but then Sally and Joey find a lady giving away "maggots," magnets in the shape of insects. Joey wants to take her home, but she has her own home with a husband. (He wouldn't come to the "rummage sale.") Harry invites her to the zoo; she refuses the zoo but accepts the beach.

That next Sunday, George and Mary come to dinner. George sits in Harry's chair, leaving Harry displaced; Mary sits in a rocker and looks right at home. After a few glasses of Anna's wine, George was teaching the children hand tricks "which Harry himself had known years ago and could have taught the children himself if he'd thought of it." And when at dinner, Harry contemplates carving the leg of lamb, George

says, "Would you like me to have a go at it, Son? I used to be a butcher." And Harry "felt the protest at being again displaced rise and stop at the word 'Son.'" "To be called 'Son,' which he never had been before in his life, was to be given time between himself and all he still had to learn."

In another story, there is a hilarious dinner scene when George gets a letter from his mother saying she'd like to come to visit, bringing her new friend, José. Sally, now six, asks where they will sleep and if they will sleep together. It turns out they haven't enough beds.

I could go on and on quoting from this set of stories, building on each other as the reader palpably feels the love and security and wisdom in Anna and Harry's home.

Jane Rule's novels have never been favorites of mine. I've found the plots too deliberate, her characters simply and the dialogue sappy and artificial. In this book, however, all her techniques and methods come together — the dialogue works, the characters are absorbing and their lives interesting. Possibly the structure of the short story itself lends to their success here: Rule can concentrate on incidents, characterizations, moments and motives. I liked some of the people very much. Not all the stories work quite as well as those about Harry and Anna, and I was surprised at how few lesbians there were. Still, I was satisfied by the wisdom Rule has to offer.

CIA-Baiting a Liberal Closet Queen

Continued from page 6

talked with them, he challenged them intellectually, he inspired them, he wrestled with them, and he made advances toward them, all this while married and the father of several children. Like many people of his generation, open homosexuality was not an option, and so his desires were limited to more furtive couplings and rechanneled into a whirlwind of frenzied political activity, a Lowenstein trademark.

By the 1970s, Lowenstein seems to have started to address more openly gay issues. To his credit, he actively sought gay political support in his perennial

congressional races. He even met privately with Bruce Voeller, then executive director of the National Gay Task Force, to explore the feasibility of coming out to his family, yet remaining married. A meeting with Howard Brown, a Lindsay administration health official who attracted national attention when he came out, was suggested but never acted upon.

What is important about Lowenstein's homosexuality is not that we can add one more famous name to the roster, so much as it allows us to explore in one more variation the intersection of sex and politics.

Striving for power, the will to lead, the desire for change originate out of many sources. Only recently — and this thanks in part to gay and feminist writers — have biographies incorporated an analysis of an individual's sexuality, not in some vulgar Freudian sense, but as helping to explain someone's internal sense of differentness or specialness — or, as I suspect in Lowenstein's case, aloneness — that becomes a springboard for a special life.

Short Political Fiction Well Worth Reading

Continued from page 6

fight, and so many others Ernestine and I have had because of this woman. Who is supposed to be Ernestine's ex-lover, but has just never made her graceful exit off this stage."

Birthera covers a lot of territory with this story: attitudes on white and Black culture, how members of each race validate and/or negate the importance of their own and each other's cultures. Most interesting, though, is the presentation of that unique problem in the tight-knit lesbian community: the constant nuisance and danger of connecting with and stumbling over ex-lovers and other members of our community whom we'd rather avoid. This story captures the anger and frustration of being forced to deal with an unwanted third party.

Two other stories, "The Year of Hannah Koznoff" by Elaine Starkman and "Keeping Sacred Secrets" by Vickie L. Sears, are told from a child's-eye-view. The

narrators, because of their youth, are fascinated by differences which are threatening to other characters in the stories. In "Hanna Koznoff," a young Jewish girl is intrigued by a Jewish family far different from her own. In "Sacred Secrets," a girl of mixed white-Indian ancestry is forced to deny her Indian heritage. The story, "Who Said We All Have To Talk Alike?" by Wilma Elizabeth McDaniel, is an amusing, though poignant, study of class conflicts. A well-to-do California lady hires an Ozark woman to be nursemaid to her children and is appalled when the children are exposed to the new woman's "incorrect speech patterns."

There is some very good fiction in this anthology, mainly from lesser-known writers. It is a volume well worth reading.

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I'd like to correspond with any TS/TV that will write. Doing 10 yrs. Please, all TV/TSs with a heart, write this lonely prisoner. David Lewis ADAMS, 360846 Eastham, Rt 1 Box 16, Lovelady TX 75851.

Could I please run a penpal ad? (I could pay for it with some poems, if that is acceptable.) I am looking for the right man to settle down with. I enjoy music, dance, outdoors, and good people. George NEWTON, 75190, Box 600 (F-2), Canon City CO 81212.

We're two fem queens living in a 7X10 cell desiring correspondence. One of us is quiet, the other semi-outspoken. Both are boistrous to gay rights. Both are active in sports as well as sex as well as finding sincere husbands, penpals or just friends. Hobbies include interior decorating, sailing, rock music, poetry. Please contact either Paul EVERSON, 090563 [aka Robin] PO Box 1100 (1584), Avon Park FL 33825; or Gregg LEVENDOSKI, 091911 [aka Vicki]. PO Box 1100 (1453), Avon Park FL 33825.

Gay American Indian, long black hair, would love to hear from TSs or TVs. I am clean. Will answer all. Can receive mail from other prisons, so shoot a lonely person a kite ASAP. Leo SANCHEZ, 631575 (A-3-31), PO Box 777, Monroe WA 98272.

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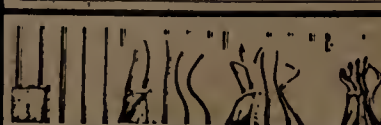


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I'm a very understanding person with a good personality towards all races. We are all human beings and we're being discriminated against by the system cause they don't understand us. I enjoy reading and sports and sharing with others. Gary RILEY, 34689, Box 900, Jefferson City MO 65102.

I'd like to write other gays, bis, etc. Race doesn't matter to me. I'll write all honest people who write. Iowa doesn't let us write other prisoners. Robert DENNEN, 207935, Box A, Oakdale IA 52319.

Seeking correspondence with gay or bi men that have a few moments to share with lonely person without a family (basically). David BERRY, EF-129684, Box 276, Chester GA 31012

Aries into art, fishing, camping, hunting and sex. I love hot sexy letters. If you want a mouthful of meat and cream write me and I'll fill your dreams. Kenny (the STUD), MURPHY, 49046 (4-M-3), 818 Jefferson Ave, Moundsville WV 26041.

GBM into hot sexy letters. Bubble butt, 10", I love to french with older whites. I'm 20. C.F. McNEAL, 048277 (1-K-10), 818 Jefferson Ave, Moundsville WV 26041.

My family and friends turned their back on me because of my gay life. Would like to hear from anyone who'd like to drop a few lines. Billy WILCHER, 176-025, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699.

Love to read, write, play chess and bridge. Have an associate degree in business and accounting, also a degree from cooking school. Please write Larry CASH, 150-946, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699.

Into bodybuilding, well hung, uncut, very hairy body W SNYDER, 45073, (1-D-18), 818 Jefferson Ave, Moundsville WV 26041.

Leaving one institution for another when you were doing ok is something to bear. but leaving the one you love is greater pain. Loving the way he did all things when we were together for a small time will stay with me forever, for always, for love. From MR (SF,VA)



TV doing time for love. 1/2 American Indian, 1/2 Italian. Capricorn, into hunting, dressing in drag, knitting and growing flowers. Interested in writing all. J.W. PITZER, 49372 (4-M-5), 818 Jefferson Ave, Moundsville WV 26041

Gay male 30 in an ocean of loneliness, on an island whose hopes are rocks and whose trees are dreams. I would like to correspond with all races. Thomas PORTER, 22390, Box 2, Lansing KS 66043

I enjoy are, the Renaissance, soft soul music and being alone with my love, my heart. Please send photo if possible. Brian CLUNE, A-070583, Box 1500 (153), Cross City FL 32628

Friendly, mature, serious-minded person seeking correspondence and friendship. My interests include law, history, and reading. Do I have a possible friend out there? W.H. FORD, 206291, Box 500, Olustee FL 32072.

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Rock Hudson: The Great Gay Hope



Mark Miller, "Hudson's Secretary"; Doris Day and Rock Hudson before the news broke; "AIDS Confirmed" on the 6 o'clock news. (All photos taken from T.V. broadcasts during the last week of July.)

By Michael Bronski

The newest image being main-lined into the popular American consciousness about AIDS is undeniably the front page: 6 o'clock TV news specials concerning a famous Hollywood movie star who has been diagnosed with the syndrome. It had to happen sooner or later. (In fact it probably has happened sooner, but the tenor of the times and the closets of the people were no doubt more secure.) This is the sort of news that everyone is interested in. It's more sensational than the hostages in Beirut and more personal than the arms talks. And for better or worse, it's probably a turning point in both the news media's perception and public understanding of AIDS.

It is ironic that Rock Hudson should be the first public person to come to the forefront with an AIDS diagnosis. Since the early 1950s he has been viewed as the ultimate romantic, heterosexual leading man in movies, first in such films as *All That Heaven Allows* and *Written on the Wind* and then elevated to the status of a household word after making several enormously popular sex comedies with Doris Day. Hudson was the heart-throb of millions, and an icon of Hollywood heterosexuality. Yet like everything else in Hollywood, that status was a fraud. No surprise.

Concurrent with Hudson's public image were the never-ending rumors of the actor's

homosexuality. The story that he and actor Jim (Gomer Pyle) Nabors were not only lovers, but had had a (gasp) marriage ceremony, appeared not only on the gay vine, but in Sunday supplements. And when gossip columnists spend so much time denying something, you know there is something behind it.

News of Hudson's illness broke fast and was full of contradictions. He had inoperable liver cancer; he had AIDS; he definitely did not have AIDS; he was tired; he was in for a checkup. All that was certain was that he had checked in the Louis Pasteur Institute in Paris — known for its AIDS work. Most TV news reports gave Hudson the reverential "star" treatment:

his celebrity status automatically making his illness more tragic, more poignant than the situation of anyone else who may have the malady. But what was conspicuously absent from all of the television — and most of the newspaper — reports was any mention of Hudson's homosexuality. *Entertainment Tonight* did make the effort to describe Mark Miller as Hudson's "long-time companion" (he ended up being "business manager" and "personal secretary" on the other reports), but almost all of the other news items ignored the obvious connection to the actor's sexuality. In fact, many of the news shows followed the Hudson report with a tag about AIDS

spreading and becoming a concern of heterosexuals, a sentiment which reflects only a partial truth about the AIDS epidemic and which inaccurately implies that Hudson is heterosexual.

The avoidance of any discussion of Hudson's sexuality is a clear case of the hypocrisy of the American press. Always more than willing to expose the private lives of those out of favor — including printing the names and addresses of anyone charged with a sex crime — they have been more than willing to distort and hide the truth about those with whom they have sympathy. (Hudson in this case is in their good graces.) Sometimes hiding behind an unconvic-

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Rock Hudson: AIDS Hope

Continued from page 7

ing plea of libel fear (you cannot libel with the truth), the media cite a person's right to privacy as reason not to discuss their sexual life. But the press notion of "privacy" is clearly regulated by homophobic assumptions that gay equals bad, and that it is preferable to "protect" someone, even on his deathbed, than to discuss his sexuality, however pertinent it may be.

But what effect has Hudson's illness had upon the news coverage of AIDS in general? It was clear that within the first week of the reports there had been more TV and newspaper space given to the topic (and Hudson) than in the entire past year. Americans love celebrities, and more so when they are sick. (Even Liz Taylor, considered by most of America to be a totally fallen woman, won an Oscar for her mediocre 1960 performance in *Butterfield 8* after she had nearly died of pneumonia.)

bizarre disease which strikes "those people" to a more serious "AIDS is spreading, and is of concern to everyone" attitude.

Probably the most important effect of the Hudson news is the coverage of his having to go to Paris for treatment. Both *20/20* and *Night Line* focused on the Americans who have left the country to be treated. And both shows articulated severe criticism of the American government and medical community for placing the treatment of people with AIDS a sluggish third after blood screening and discovering a vaccine. Geraldo Rivera on *20/20* went so far as to accuse both the government and medical industry of deep-seated bigotry against homosexuals, IV drug users, and Haitians.

Although this new, and more insightful, news coverage is welcome, there is also a problem with its being instigated by Rock

(heterosexual, by omission) movie star, the newscasters and writers can ignore the real and important connections that do exist between AIDS and the gay community.

But for all the drawbacks — and there will be more in the future — the added news coverage is a positive step in the right direction. Even the language being used is improving. *Entertainment Tonight* has gradually been changing the phrase "AIDS victim" to "AIDS patient." Several of the reports on fundraising have made it quite clear that the work which was being done by the gay community was helping everyone. And other celebrities have been more open in discussing the disease. Actor Stephen Stucker (he played the ditzy queen air controller in *Airplane!*) has announced that he has had AIDS for five years and has spoken about his health struggles and working in the industry. Such publicity can only help inform the



Rock Hudson



Mark Miller

Given the tenor and paucity of news reporting on AIDS over the past three years, any increase in coverage would be an improvement.

Hudson personalized, for the news media and many Americans, a malady that most people refused to talk about, or when they did, presumed was restricted to self-inflicted and deserving victims. Some broadcasters who spoke of the syndrome with medical detachment, or moralistic condescension, now had a heartfelt tear in their voices. (A snide tone still crept into some of the reports.) The presentation of this sort of news always depends upon garnering an identification with the subject — "If this could happen to a rich, famous movie star, it could happen to me"; that identification would be more difficult (if not impossible for some) if Hudson were openly spoken of as being gay.

Given the tenor and the paucity of news reporting on AIDS over the past three years, any increase in coverage would be an improvement. After the Hudson news, many of the stations began running updates, or backtracks, on AIDS news, and ABC's *20/20* rushed an almost completed special on AIDS to the air. The tone of most of the shows has changed from the usual "This is a

Hudson's coming out as a person with AIDS. Many of the newscasters have used the Hudson angle to connect AIDS with heterosexual contagion, while continuing to ignore the effect the syndrome has had upon the gay community, or more importantly, how the perception of it as a "gay disease" has affected public opinion, news reporting and research.

Even more obnoxious is the isolating of Hudson as an AIDS "victim" outside of any social (or sexual) context. At the end of the *20/20* show, much of it quite moving in its interviews with gay men seeking treatment in Paris, host Hugh Downs wrapped up by saying "and we all wish Rock Hudson the best of luck in dealing with his illness." Although not intended as malicious, Downs' remark was a slap in the face of anyone else who has been coping and living with AIDS these last years. This same thinking — which runs endemic in the media's touting of the famous — was echoed by a gay man interviewed on *Night Line*. "Yesterday I had AIDS," he said, "today I have Rock Hudson's Disease." By presenting Hudson as a famous

public, on any number of levels, about AIDS and its effects upon people's lives. Such luminaries as Bette Midler and Liz Taylor have announced large fundraisers to help raise money both for research and for treatment programs.

The other side of this, of course, is the backlash. The Boston *Herald* ran a piece on many Hollywood industry people attacking Hudson for working with other actors after he knew he had AIDS. One producer said he would not let his actress wife do any intimate scenes with gay actors. And we are still faced with those camera crews who refuse to work on the set while anyone with AIDS is being interviewed.

AIDS is not only a physical reality. On another level it is an indicator of social attitudes towards disease, gay people and other minorities. The revelations about Rock Hudson have changed the way the news media reports on AIDS. Things had to get better. Now it is up to us, as viewers, to demand that they remain so.

Kowalski

Continued from page 1

she attempt to visit Kowalski. The next day, Thompson was told by a nursing home administrator that she could not visit Kowalski until a decision was made upon the return of the home's head administrator the next week. As *GCN* goes to press, Thompson has gained the head administrator's permission to see Kowalski, and is traveling to Hibbing for their first visit since the July 23 court decision.

A decision on the August 8 motion should be made after August 21, when Donald Kowalski's lawyer returns from vacation. Andrzejewski reports that Donald Kowalski is preparing to extend the legal battle on two grounds: first, his lawyer will be preparing a motion to waive the Minnesota

statute that throws disputed guardianship decisions back to previous agreements, thus blocking Thompson's access to her lover once again; and second, his lawyer will be preparing a motion to delay the restraining order should it be granted.

Thompson's case has been a considerable financial drain. Currently, she owes over \$25,000 in legal fees. Tax-deductible donations may be sent to Minnesota Gay and Lesbian Legal Assistance or Minnesota Society for Personal Liberties, c/o Suzanne Born, 3436 Homes Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

Andrzejewski also recommends that people write letters of support to Sharon Kowalski, who has re-

portedly had several bouts of depression due to strain surrounding the case. She can be reached at the Leisure Hills Nursing Home, 1500 East Third Avenue, Hibbing, MN 55746.

— filed from Boston

CORRECTION

In "Meese's Crew Looks at Porn" by Janice Irvine, Vol. 13, No.6, Hunter refers to Nan Hunter of the New York Anti-Censorship Task Force (FACT). An initial reference to Nan Hunter was omitted from the article by mistake.

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1 LF, 40, seeks 2 LF's 25+ to share spacious, sportive, spiritual household in Brookline, near T. Min drugs/alc. Rent \$220/month+ util+ pkg. Call 232-9089, Jasmine (10)

L, 34, looking for L 30 or older to share spacious 6 room apt. in JP. Owner occupied. Must be willing to live with dog. Non-smoker pref. Call 524-7774 (8)

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Middle-aged, bisexual man wishes to share small apartment with stable, emotionally mature, financially responsible, communicative, considerate and cooperative person or couple. No pets or drugs please. Call David at 923-0082 at any hour. (c)

L, 30+, independent, responsible, seeks same to share large 2 bedroom apt. in Somerville. Available 9/1 \$250+ utils. Incl. w/d. Call 776-2705 or lve message at 277-9355 (7)

3 LF's seek 4th for spacious JP apt. Smoke, alc, and drug free. Please no more pets. Near Orange line. \$175+. 522-9094. Available immediately. (8)

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LF 30's seeks LF to share large, sunny apt in JP. 2 bdrms, study, modern kitchen & bath, near T. Have 2 cats already, so no addtl pets. Non-smoker, no drugs, semi-vegit, coop arrngmt, neat. \$287.50 + util. 522-5617. Call after 7/8 (2)

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GM, 35, MIT grad student seeks 1 housemate for large 2br apt. by Porter Square (5 minute walk to new T station) pkg, 2 porches, den, lr, furn. Available 9/1 \$375 (includes heat) and utils. Write Peter, Apt. 2-C, 60 West 13 Street, NYC 10011 (6)

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NASHUA AREA GAYS meet on Mondays at 8:00 pm. For info write Nashua Area Gays, PO Box 885, Nashua, NH 03060. (0)

GCN SPECIALS

NEEDED: Someone who would like to help update the our Index of GCN articles (by title). To be typed, but no need for great speed. Call Mike at 426-4469. (c)

GAY BOOKS NEEDED!!

If you've got some gay paperbacks you won't need anymore, please donate them to GCN's Prisoner Project to be sent out to lesbians and gay men behind bars. We're at 167 Tremont St., Boston MA 02111. Thanks!

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Feminist poet & counselor Ellen Bass will return to Boston in October to lead two workshops:

Friday, Oct. 18 — a one-day workshop for women lovers and friends of survivors of child sexual abuse. Call Mady at 522-6813 for info.

Sat. & Sun., Oct. 19-20 — a weekend workshop for women survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Call Pam at 524-6209.

CALENDAR

August 17 to September 14

17 saturday

Boston — Lily Tomlin in performance. Wilbur Theater, 426 Tremont. 8PM. Also Monday 8/19-9/7. Box office opens 8/12. \$5-\$25. Info: 423-4008.

Brookline — Red Hearts monthly potluck for leftward-leaning gay men. 7-9PM. Info: 547-5166.

Gloucester — D.O.B. Annual Picnic at Jane's. 1PM. All women invited. Bring food, swimsuits, toys; grills provided. Info: 661-3633.

Cambridge — *Mirror-Images, Stories of Moslem Women*. Alley Theater, 1253 Cambridge St. 8PM. \$10. Continues through 9/14. Info: 491-8166 or 731-9153.

Boston — "Beyond Therapy," a comedy by Christopher Durang. 949 Commonwealth Ave. 8PM. \$6/\$4 students and senior citizens. Continues through 8/31. Wheelchair accessible. Info: 424-1984.

18 sunday

Boston — Boat trip to George's Island with Am Tikva. Picnic. \$3 for ferry. Info: 782-8894.

Norwell, MA — North River Flatwater Canoeing with Chiltern Mt. Club. Swimming and picnic. Canoe rental, \$10. Info: Wayne, 536-3495.

Ipswich — Ionian Society, a group for lesbians & gay men of Greek heritage, day trip to the Grecian Festival. Info: Stephanie, 357-5774.

Jamaica Plain — Disabled lesbian potluck and discussion group. 2PM. Wheelchair accessible. Info: 524-1142.

Brookline — Brookline/Brighton/Allston Neighborhood Gays & Lesbians picnic barbecue. Christian Herter Park, Soldiers Field Rd. (opposite the Ramada Inn). 11:30AM. Bring food to share. Info: Ross, 787-3775.

New Hampshire — Roaring Brook/Lonesome Lake Day-Hike, sponsored by Chiltern Mt. Club. Info: Bob, 282-9192.

19 monday

Boston — Boston Lesbian & Gay Political Alliance **Candidates Night**: at-large candidates for city council and school committee. Harriet Tubman House. 7PM.

20 tuesday

Boston — Boston Lesbian & Gay Political Alliance **Candidates Night**: district candidates for city council and school committee. Old South Church, Gordon Chapel. 7PM.

21 wednesday

Concord — After-work Birdwatching with Chiltern Mt. Club. Leave Cambridge 5:45PM. Info: Peter, 623-5368.

22 thursday

Boston — GCN's production night when articles are proofread and pasted up. Join the fun; read tomorrow's news today. 5-8PM for proofing, 7:30-midnight for lay-out. 167 Tremont St. (near Park and Boylston "T"). GCN: 426-4469.

Boston — "AIDS: Is the Gay Community Being Held Hostage?" a program with Jack McCarty, former hostage in Beirut. 7PM, Arlington St. Church. Info: AIDS Action Committee, 536-7733.

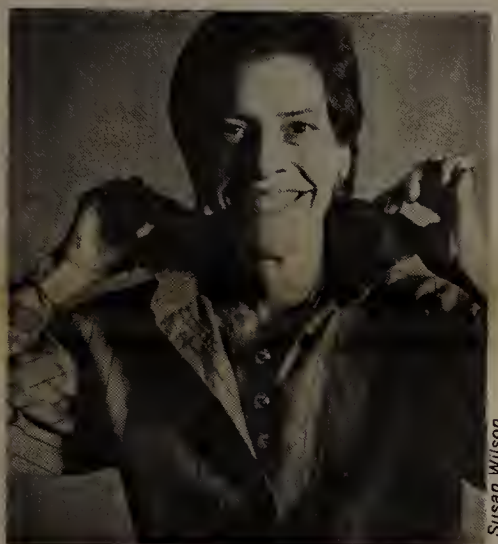


Tom Wilson-Weinberg, August 24

Cambridge — "Getting Out" by Marsha Norman, presented by Harvard-Radcliffe Summer Theatre. Loeb Drama Center, 64 Brattle St. \$5.50/\$3.50 students. Continues through August 24. Info: 864-2630.

23 friday

Boston — GCN's VOLUNTEER NIGHT: come help send the paper to our subscribers. Refreshments & good times. Anytime after 6PM. 167 Tremont St. (near Park and Boylston "T"). To be let in, buzz GCN's intercom outside the street entrance. GCN: 426-4469.



Susan Abod, August 24

24 saturday

Cambridge — Cabaret and boogie benefit for Gay/Lesbian Defense Committee. George Fulginiti-Shakar, Susan Abod, Tom Wilson-Weinberg, Marcia Taylor, and Buffy Berg. Cabaret, 8PM. Dance, 9:30PM. \$3 each, \$5 for both. Old Cambridge Baptist Church. Info: 661-0974.

Boston — New England Women's Sports Connection's Softball Tournament. Esplanade. 9AM (All day). For individuals, teams & spectators. Registration: 576-6788.

Boston — Provincetown Boat Trip with the Metropolitan Community Church of Boston. Commonwealth Pier. 9AM-6:30PM. \$18.

Dorchester — Dorchester Gay & Lesbian Alliance **Summer Barbecue**. 4PM. Info: Ed, 288-4367 or Diane, 288-9155.

25 sunday

Boston — Brunch at Downtown Cafe to benefit the Scondras Campaign. Noon, 12 LaGrange St. \$5. Info: 266-0735.

Cambridge — Cambridge Neighborhood G.A.L.A. Potluck Supper. 6PM. All residents and friends from Cambridge are invited. Info: Robin & Laura, 354-6237.

Jamaica Plain — Lesbian/Gay Neighbors Potluck Picnic. Jamaica Pond, Moraine St., entrance by ODT sign. Bring food to share plus nonalcoholic beverage. Rain location: First Church Hall, Eliot & Centre Sts. Info: 522-3894 or 522-6090.

Provincetown — DeLaria & Strobel, musical comedy cabaret. Pilgrim House, 336 Commercial St. Performing through Labor Day. Info: 487-0319.

Cambridge — Bi-bicycling with the Boston Bisexual Women's Network. Meet at Out of Town Newstand, Harvard Square. 10:30AM. Bike to Walden Pond. Info: 731-1399.

Upstate New York — Northeast Fairie gathering for gay men. Continues all week long. Info: Bruce Goldstein, 507 Columbus Ave., No. 4, Boston 02118.

Cambridge — Women's Softball just-for-fun. Magazine Field, Memorial Drive. 4-6PM. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

28 wednesday

Brighton — BLG/PA endorsements meeting. 7PM, Jackson-Mann School, Union Sq.

Cambridge — Dinah Washington birthday party with Free Lance Wife Review, jazz and poetry. 9:30PM, Charlie's Tap, 380 Green St., Central Sq. \$3. Info: 492-8436.

september 5 thursday

Boston — Lily Tomlin benefit performance for the AIDS Action Committee. 8PM, Wilbur Theater. Party to follow at the Wang Center. \$37.50. AAC, 16 Haviland St., Boston 02115.

Haverhill — GALLYNS, Gay & Lesbian Liberated Youth of the North Shore. For people 22 and under. Info: Larry, 373-7618 or write: P.O. Box 1803, Haverhill 01830.

6 friday

Watertown — "Hospice and Hope," a 2-day conference with keynote speaker Elizabeth Kubler-Ross. Info: 894-1100.

Cambridge — Sexuality and long-term lesbian relationships, a video by Catherine Russo. 7PM, 186 Hampshire St., Inman Sq. \$2 donation.

Cambridge — Lesbian Lawyers' monthly meeting. Info: 426-1350.

7 saturday

Cambridge — Pat Parker, Black lesbian poet, reads to benefit GCN. 8PM, Paine Hall, Harvard Univ. Reception and book-signing to follow. \$5 more or less. Wheelchair accessible and sign interpreted. Info: 426-4469.

8 sunday

Boston — Cruise to P'town with Tri-County Assoc. 11:30AM, Pier 4, Charlestown. Return 11:30PM. Lunch, dancing, movies. \$25, advance; \$30 at the boat. Info: 429-6593.

11 wednesday

Brookline — Brookline Human Rights Ordinance organizational meeting. Info: Zev or John, 445-8662.

12 thursday

Nantucket — 4-day fiesta with Chiltern Mt. Club. Reservations with \$125: Sullivan/Gentle, Box HH, Truro 02666.

14 saturday

Cambridge — GCN benefit showing of *Pink Triangles*, panel on homophobia to follow. 8PM, Paine Hall, Harvard Univ. \$4, advance; \$5, door. Info: 426-4469.

Jamaica Plain — Feminist Cluster potluck picnic, social and organizing. For individuals and affinity groups. Noon-3PM, the Arboretum. Info: 522-7466.

note this!

Mirror Images, *Stories of Moslem Women*, by Eliza Wyatt. Directed by Geryl Horton. Produced by Page Productions at the Alley Theater, Cambridge. Through Sept. 14.

Eliza Wyatt's *Mirror-Images* attempts to explore the conflict between modern and traditional ways of life for residents of an unnamed Moslem country, with an emphasis on women. The title refers to a game of two twin sisters and to the idea that countries can serve as mirrors for each other as well. A statement by the company unintentionally also describes the play, written by a Western woman married for 20 years to a Moslem man: "In trying to find out about others we reveal our own strengths and weaknesses reflected in what we find, what we choose to marvel at, and what we fail to see."

The strength of the play is its depiction of loving family relationships between the women in Moslem culture: Ingy, who has just completed her medical training in France, her three aunts, and her grandmother. Ingy returns home to take up medical practice and is jilted by her fiancé, who offers the explanation, "We love each other too much," a concept never illuminated in the play. Rahzi, one of the aunts, has just been named head of the Welfare Department, in the same government shake-up that has seen the creation of a Department of Religious Teachings. The fascistic nature of the religious controls is clearly drawn, but where Wyatt stops short is in identifying the Western cultural imperialism that preceded it. In Wyatt's view, Western culture — shown as nice clothing, eating in fancy French restaurants, and having a profession — is unquestionably good for women, and any of its excesses, such as materialism, are not acknowledged.

Male domination of this country, which closely resembles Iran in its theocracy, is neatly brought out when a male religious leader explains the new dress laws, announcing that women *want* to wear the veil. When Rahzi is arrested for wearing Western clothes, she refuses to sign a confession of general guilt, and fights back with readings from the Koran, which show that the subjugation of women is not called for in the holy text. This scene, in contrast to an earlier overextended one, is all too short, and I wish we could have heard more. In general, though, her rebellion is more that of the Western-identified than that of a feminist. The only one who seems to have political sense is the smugly modern male newscaster, and it is he who joins the resistance.

The play does not so much end as stop, with Ingy reconciled to waiting for another true love, and the newscaster hoping to be that one; Rahzi still imprisoned; and the rest of the family continuing on in their chosen ways of dealing with the world. Renee Mardon, Ann Dover, and Susan Hackett are the most believable as Aunt Chelli, the grandmother, and Rahzi, respectively. It was somewhat disturbing to see this performed by an all-white cast, as well as a bit confusing. And finally, the good efforts of the actors can't compensate for a script that lacks cohesiveness and is ironically a bit ethnocentric.

— Mara Math

Crompton-Noll Award for Gay Literary Studies

Deadline for Entries: October 1
The Crompton-Noll Award, honoring the two founders of the Gay Caucus of the Modern Language Association, is made yearly for a bibliographical, historical, or critical essay, published (during 1984) or unpublished, on a topic related to gay studies. The cash award is \$200. Submit six copies of the essay and a nominating letter.
Cynthia Secor, HERS, Mid-America, University of Denver, Colorado Women's College Campus, Denver, CO 80220.

Calendar compiled by Miranda Kolbe

PINK TRIANGLES

*a film about prejudice against
lesbians and gay men*

a benefit showing for

Gay Community News

Saturday, September 14th

A discussion with the filmmakers
will follow

8:00 p.m.

Paine Hall

Harvard University

Cambridge, MA

Four Dollars in Advance

available from Gay Community News

Five Dollars at the door

Pink Triangles was produced by the Pink Triangle Collective for Cambridge Documentary Films, Inc., a non-profit filmmaking and distribution organization. Rental/sale of the film is available. Contact the Cambridge Documentary Films at P.O. Box 385, Cambridge, MA 02139, (617) 354-3677.

YES, I would like to buy _____ tickets at \$4 each.

Enclosed is \$ _____.

I am unable to attend the screening, but would like to contribute \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

*All contributions are fully tax deductible.
Checks may be made payable to GCN or Gay Community News
for more information cal GCN at 426-4469*